MOUNTAINEERS

OR

BOTTLED SUNSHINE FOR BLUE MONDAYS

JEAN YELSEW

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Yours Truly,

"JEAN YELSEW."

THE

MOUNTAINEERS:

Or,

BOTTLED SUNSHINE FOR BLUE MONDAYS

BY "JEAN YELSEW"
(J. WESLEY SMITH, D.D.),
Author of "A Rose That Saved."

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Dedication.

To Those Afflicted with Insomnia, and who have to While Away the Long, Weary Hours of the Night in Loneliness for the Want of a Soothing Opiate; to that Large Class of my Fellow-citizens who Suffer with the Blues, whose Very Existence is Rendered Almost Intolerable by Mental or Bodily Depression; and to Those whose Cares, Financial and Domestic, bring Shadows that Weary and Forebodings as Melancholy and Distressing as Those who are Seized by the Terrible Clutches of a Dreadful Nightmare of Despondency: This Volume is Affectionately Dedicated by

The Author.

PREFACE.

In coming the second time before the public, the author regrets to say that it has not been at the instigation of the millions of the literati demanding the productions of his fertile brain, and, so far as he knows, there has been no clamor by an impatient or hungry multitude for "The Mountaineers." He has not been importuned by the hundreds of publishers, both for the pleasure and profit of manufacturing his literary creations; nor has he been nagged and coaxed into it by the shrewd book-store dealers, demanding polished wares that will sell to their cultured and select trade; neither has he been vain enough to think that he is filling "a long-felt want." But with an honest desire to do simple justice to a much maligned but noble people, he sends this volume forth.

The author has spent much time in the past thirty years with and among the mountain people of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. He has eaten at their tables, slept under their roofs, partaken of their hospitality, and knows whereof he speaks. And now as I write this preface, in fancy Memory carries me back on her rapid wing to those happy hours spent in my boyhood days in the elegant homes of Colonel A. M. Shook and the Colyars on the Cumberland Mountains, as well as in the cabin homes of the Saunderses and Andersons on the edge of "Gizzard Gulf," where the

monotonous hoot of the night owl was often broken by the howls of a hungry pack of prowling wolves.

The material composing this book has been gathered direct from the "natives"—the dialect, home life, and anecdotes of these "highlanders" as seen and heard by the writer. In many of the stories the name and locality have purposely been omitted, but the facts are none the less true. Many of the incidents and anecdotes have been used by the author in lectures and in newspaper or magazine articles, but usually under a *nom de plume* or anonymously. The illustrations were sketched by the author; and, while they may not be artistic, they crudely convey his meaning.

Having been treated so kindly by the press and reading public in his first book, "A Rose That Saved," the author presumes to come this second time in his reminiscences of "The Mountaineers," hoping that those who may chance to read this volume, if they are not made wiser and better for the reading, will at least find something that shall chase away for a moment the shadows from the brow of care, paint a smile on the cheek of the despondent, and that it may be a solace for that great class who so much need "bottled sunshine for their bluest Mondays."

"JEAN YELSEW."

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THE MOUNTAINEERS.

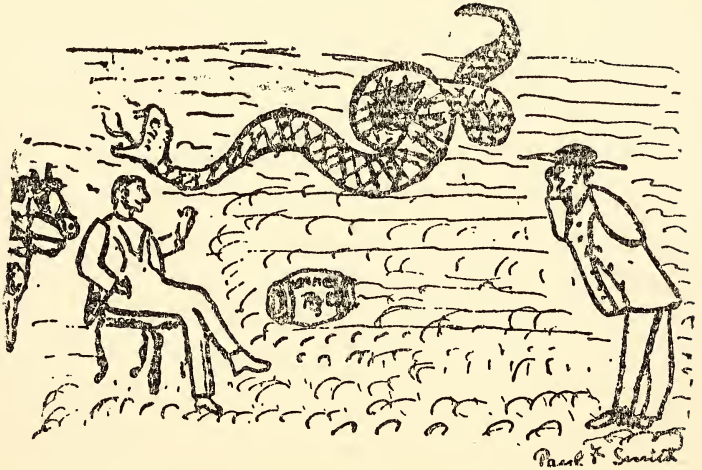
CHAPTER I.

HOME LIFE—MISREPRESENTATION.

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone,
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own."

THE best-advertised people for their deficiencies and the worst maligned for their virtues are the so-called mountaineers. A great deal has been said, and much has been written, about that class of our fellow-citizens whose homes are on or among the mountains of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia; and to one who has traveled among and lived with these people, how strange the stories we see in the newspapers and magazines! How little truth, and how unlike the very characters they have undertaken to describe! Of course these writers found what they were sent to get—"a man of straw"—and, like the patent medicine man, what they did not have on hand they could easily make. Do you

know of a book or a novel descriptive of mountain character, life, or dialect but what is a fabrication, whose foundation is the merest shadow or semblance of the truth? But such writers deserve a great deal of credit, for they have made more out of less material than almost any other class of writers I have read after. Take one item, "dialect," for example. Have these people a dialect of their own? We answer, no. They have no dialect that is not peculiar to every part of these United States —city or country. We all know well enough that there is no part of this country, North or South, East or West, England as well as America, but has its uneducated classes; and there are certain provincialisms peculiar to each and every community, it matters not in what altitude or climate or section we select from, nor how well supplied with educational advantages it may be. We are all inclined to magnify our own and minify the good traits of the other fellow. Every man lives right in the center of the universe, and his neighbor just a little to one side. And when it happens that we don our Sunday clothes and start out among our distant neighbors on a prospecting



"I'll bet my horse against a summer coon skin that you saw the whisky barrel long before you did the snakes."

tour, how soon we turn missionary, and not only dilate on the magnitude, superiority, refinement, and wealth of the people in that "land of corn and wine" we left behind us, but we belabor our neighbors for their want of progressiveness, lack of enterprise, their ignorance, illiteracy, and the poverty and degradation of its people as compared with "our own." "We" rarely make mistakes; it is the other man. These critics are like Frank Gulley, who had been in Texas and returned to his native heath somewhat "boozy" and was telling one of his neighbors of the many "big things" he had seen in the "Lone Star" State. "Jim," said he, "Texas is the greatest place you ever saw for snakes. There are more of them and the biggest snakes you ever saw. Why, I saw snakes out there seventy-five feet long and as big around as a whisky barrel. Don't you believe it?" "Why, certainly," said Jim. "I don't doubt it in the least, but I will bet my horse against a summer coon skin that you saw the whisky barrel long before you did the snakes." And so many of the stories told to the detriment of these mountaineers are of a similar origin. They were born in a distorted

and prefilled imagination; some of them "made out of the whole cloth." Like Paddy, the Irish servant girl, who was telling her mistress of an "awful" dream she had and how uneasy she felt, when her mistress remarked: "Why, Paddy, you must have been asleep when you had that dream." "Indade I was not aslape, madam! Oi was as woide-awake then as Oi am now."

In fact there is as much gentility, refinement, and, I may say, education among these mountain people in proportion to population, all things considered, as you will find in the valleys, village, or city. There may not be that glamour of dress, the polish of polite speech or manners which is largely made by rubbing constantly one against another in city or village, like the smooth stone that has been polished or rounded by the constant wear of the water or grinding of the glacier, but there is a freedom of speech and manner that betokens the kindliness and real gentility of the lady or gentleman. And while there may exist that same difference that has always existed between the country and the urban populations, an indifference to dress or an aversion

"Why, Paddy, you must have been asleep when you had that dream."

"Indade Oi was not aslape; Oi was as wide-awake then as Oi am now."

to loud or showy manners on the one side, and that pride of apparel, personal adornment, and excessive civility or politeness on the other; it would be better for both if one could take off and the other put on a little—the one from the other, and thus even up their seeming discrepancies. Yet it is unfair—yea, unjust—to measure the whole community of mountaineers by a few feeble-minded illiterates that may be found here and there, and to chide these good people with failings they do not possess. Of course now and then you will run across a funny character, just as you do in every other community, who will butcher the king's English and otherwise excite your risibles by their grotesque manners and speech. There was Dan Knox, for instance, who was as much of an "oddity" among his mountain neighbors as he would have been in Boston or Nashville. He always called his wife Brimmer, and never knew, and cared less to know, anything about the "niceties" of his native language. Dan and Brimmer had both been sick, and had not yet recovered, when a kind and intelligent neighbor called to make inquiry about their condition. "How

are you, Dan?" said the neighbor. "Well, nabor, I've got just about es much of this sickness as I ken toat. You see, Dr. Walter he sot in on Brimmer fust, and I recking the stuff he gin her has erbout fetched her round bout square ergin; but that stuff he gin me made me sicker'an a yaller dog, and went right fernent my stomach, and I just puked and puked and groaned until I reckon you could a hearn me over yander fur a mile. Brimmer (thet's my wife) thinks my entrails an' my goozelings are all gone, but I feel now ef I could git a sliver of bread and a good size hunk o' meat I'd soon be able to chaw terbacker agin." But Dan is an exception.

Most of the denizens of our mountains in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia are descendants of the original English and German Protestants and French Huguenots, and many of the families now living there represent the fourth and fifth generations of those stalwart seekers after political and religious liberty. They settled in the mountains because "lands" were cheaper, the air purer, and the demands and restraints of crowded society were not congenial to

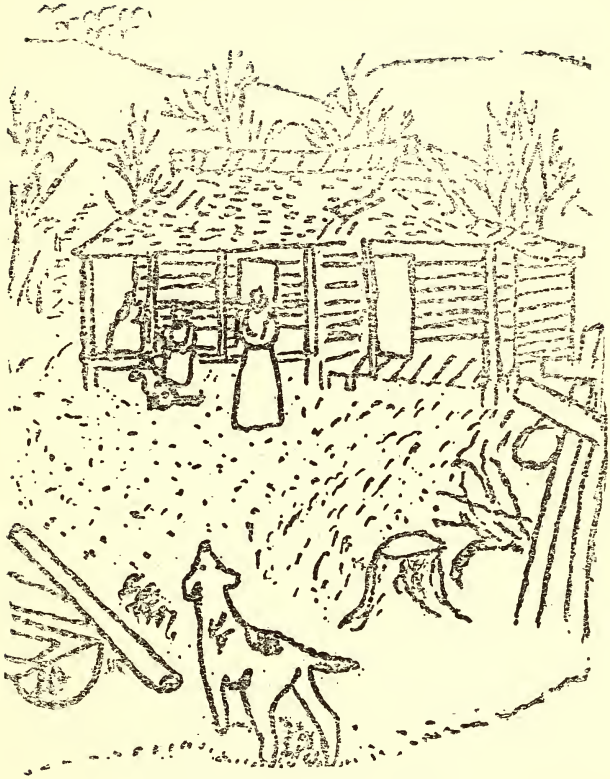
their natures. Some loved the solitude; others were fond of sport, and sought it in the chase of the deer, buffalo, and bear; and now and then the mountain lion was an attraction to the lovers of exciting adventure. These people have grown up like the mountains around them, with strong bodies, rugged but healthy minds, and their morals as pure as their native "highland air." But the enterprising Yankees and their colaborers, the magazine and newspaper critics, have wasted a great deal of artificial sympathy and shed a great many very salty and hypocritical tears over these unfortunate "dwellers of the Alps." When these benevolent philanthropists find "the ignorant, illiterate native" with large boundaries of untouched forests of valuable timber lands undergirded with rich veins of black diamond coal, they deplore his uncultured intellect and covet his undeveloped wealth. They long to improve his mind and to secure his property. Of course their actions are based on the "law of benevolent assimilation." Their motives are just about as impersonal and unselfish as the fussy old woman who had been shopping in New York and

came rushing to the train just as it was ready to pull out, and inquired of the conductor if that train stopped at Palmyra. Being informed that it did, she was helped by the conductor into a seat, and when her bundles were finally gotten in and the conductor was about to start on his round of duties, she called to him: "Say, Mr. Conductor, be sure and let me know when we get to Palmyra!" "All right, madam," said he. In a few moments he passed, taking up the tickets, and she reminded him again not to forget her when he got to Palmyra; and the patient conductor promised that he would not neglect her. She saw him again in a moment at the far end of her car, and shouted to him: "Now say, please, Mr. Conductor, don't forget me when you get to Palmyra." The now infuriated "ticket puncher" walked back to her and said: "Madam, I'm the conductor of this train. I'm paid to do this business, and it is my duty to put passengers on and off the train. Please don't be uneasy, for when we get to your station I will see that you get off." "All right, Mr. Conductor, just so you don't forget me when you get to Palmyra." Well, the conductor went on, and

the old woman quieted down. Passengers got on and off. The busy conductor forgot the fussy old woman. The train reached Palmyra at last. Some got off, many got on, and the train pulled out. Just before he reached the next station beyond Palmyra he went into the car, and to his surprise there was the old woman! She had been forgotten. He rushed to the front car, rang the bell, and caused the engineer to back the train to Palmyra. Just as he was backing into the depot, with flushed face and confused manners he went in to apologize and to put the old lady off. "Pardon me, madam, I forgot you; but we have backed the train and are now in the depot. Can I help you with your bundles?" "La, Mr. Conductor, I didn't want to get off at Palmyra. My daughter told me when I got to Palmyra to take a pill!" So with many of the detractors of our mountaineers. It's not to improve their minds, but to cabbage their mines; not to save their souls, but to secure their soil. Many of his brethren of the "highlands" need the moral, social, and intellectual sympathy of the so-called philanthropist; but when the train of progress reaches

that station, and the conductor of "brotherly kindness" proffers to help him off, he is informed that it is not his purpose to stop, but that his daughter, "Avarice," cautioned him when he got to this place to take a pill, a financial tonic, a liver stimulant, and with one supreme struggle of deglutition he swallows not the mountaineers but the mountain.

In many parts of the mountains proper the population is sparsely settled—people live at great distances apart; a major portion of all the inhabitants are poor. Schoolhouses are not of the best, church houses not of the latest pattern; and yet these people have their "free public schools" and their regular stated religious services. An ordinary English education is put within reach of almost all the children of school age, and many aspire to and obtain a regular collegiate and a university education. They are a people of simple habits, and they live plainly. The typical mountain home is a double log house, "chinked and daubed," shedded kitchen and dining room, with plain rustic porch covering the entire front of the building. In many of these homes the old spinning wheel and loom may yet be



A TYPICAL MOUNTAIN HOME.

seen side by side with the modern sewing machine and organ, and now and then a piano. The good housewife still has her pile of bed-quilts and woven spreads stacked smoothly on the old chest or carefully folded on the wall shelf. Two comfortable beds stand in each room, and in the family room the same old trundle bed is carefully tucked away under the big bed. The old gun rack for the rifle over the door is there, and hard by hang the shot pouch and powder horn. The open fireplace with its big blazing log heap is still, as in other days, the happy gathering place of the long winter evenings. To say that these people are not happy or contented would be wide of the mark. They live plainly and simply, their wants are few, and where little is desired little is required. Most of our wants are unreal; they are imaginary, and, like much of our commercial values, they are fictitious. After all, the great rush of the human family is for happiness and contentment, not wealth, only as it helps to that end. Most of our modern civilization, our boasted inventions and conveniences, so far as real happiness, life, enjoyment, and pleasure are concerned, are a sham, both a

delusion and a snare. They tantalize, but do not satisfy. How they mock our thirst and disappoint our expectation!

The great majority of the mountaineers are religious or religiously inclined. The Methodist, Missionary Baptist, Presbyterian, and Primitive or Hardshell Baptist are the principal Churches. In many of their homes family prayers are held night and morning, and they never sit down to their table to eat without returning thanks. The library consists largely of a Bible and hymn book. Profane or obscene language is rarely heard among these people, and the larger portion of them are strictly temperate. The "moonshine distillery" and the "blind tiger" business is carried on largely by foreigners, "outlaws," many of whom have taken refuge in the mountain fastnesses; but the natives know little about them, and rarely will you see one of them who stoops to "outlawry." Very few of the modern social evils have reached or found lodgment with these people. Free-loveism, spiritualism, and the thousand and one other "isms" that poison many other communities, are unknown to them. Their religious convictions are deep,

and many of them are not only pious, but extremely spiritual. They detest a sham morality, and a man who professes to be religious and betrays a bad character is branded a hypocrite. Take one case in particular. It was in the heart of the Cumberland Mountains and in the neighborhood of Shiloh Church. Everybody in that community belonged to the Church—were professors of religion—and all, men and women, prayed in public when called upon; and it was said that a "sinner" could not stay long in that settlement without making a profession of religion or "moving to other parts." Their pastor preached to them only one Sunday in the month, and the other three Sundays some one of the local laymen would conduct a prayer or song service. At a protracted service the pastor had been assisted by an exhorter from a distant valley, and when the exhorter returned to his home he mentioned to his brother that some of the people at Shiloh were very anxious to secure some one to give them lessons in vocal music. Now this brother of the exhorter, Jim Bilus, a tall, lean, lank fellow, with an unsavory reputation —rather a wild, harum-scarum kind of crea-

ture who did not like to work, but fiddled and frolicked around most of his time through the neighborhood—had attended several "singing schools," picked up some little knowledge of vocal music, and in some way had become possessor of a tuning fork; and so he concluded that it would be a good chance for him to pick up from the simple-hearted mountain people a few stray dimes on the good reputation of his brother. Leaving his valley home, he climbed the mountain, and, after a journey of some fifty miles, reached Shiloh late Saturday evening. He published through the settlement, so far as he could, that he was a professor of music, a brother of the exhorter Bilus, and that he was there to give lessons in vocal music. When Sunday came, as usual, the whole neighborhood turned out for prayer meeting. Professor Bilus was there, shaking hands with his prospective patrons and looking as prim as a rose with his high paper collar and little red string necktie. The people shook hands with him, inquired after his brother, and every one that he met would ask if he was religious, if he was a member of the Church, and if he prayed in public. The Pro-

fessor began to feel strangely tired, the religious atmosphere was oppressively heavy as he evasively answered in the affirmative, but in some way a feeling crept over him that he was not in the right pew, and that somehow something might happen, he knew not what. Conscience, which makes cowards of us all, kept chiding and warning the Professor that every time he lied about being religious or a Church member he was only in some mysterious way weaving about himself fetters that would throttle or entangle him in their meshes, and he was seized with a longing desire to get away or suddenly depart from Shiloh; for he had a presentiment that, unless he could convince these people that he was actually religious, he would lose his position; that it was "lie" or starve, and that he must either ship at once to some other port or continue to prevaricate; and he chose the latter. When the hour arrived for service, the little church was pretty well filled, and the tall Professor was seated in the midst, trying to look smart, but feeling terribly mean. His feelings reached a climax (for of course he was the cynosure of all eyes) when the leader walked

down the aisle to where he was and asked him to conduct the service. After a brief but severe flutter of excitement, an acute palpitation of the heart, he finally made out to excuse himself on account of his being very tired after his long horseback ride the day before. After a song the leader called all to prayer, and then in a very slow but clear and distinct voice he said: "Will Professor Bilus, our visiting brother from the valley, lead us in the prayer?" It was like an earthquake shock, and very nearly scared the Professor "out of his boots." He knew that it would not do for him to fail to respond—if he did, that was the end of his singing school—but he had never prayed except during thunder storms, or when he thought he was going to die; besides, he could not think of anything to say. He hesitated a moment. His first thought, after he somewhat recovered from the shock, was to ask to be excused; but he had waited too long for that, so he concluded to blindly make the plunge at it, and started off with the first lines of the old hymn: "'O for a closer walk with'—O, no; not that," he said audibly in his excitement; and now he

began: " 'Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray the Lord my'—O, pshaw! Amen."

And when the distressed but sympathetic audience arose from their knees, they found that the Professor, like the Arab, had folded his tent and silently stolen away, fading like an apparition to be seen no more.

While their standard of morality will average with that of other sections of the country, these people are not religiously morose or sour; never harsh in their judgment of others; neither do they wear the long, sanctimonious face, but are usually bright and cheerful. They have a keen sense of the ridiculous, enjoy a joke, and relish a hearty laugh as well as any people you were ever among.

Old Squire Lewis, who was born and lived on Walden's Ridge until he was a grown man, tells of an incident that occurred when he was a small boy, which has been some eighty odd summers ago. In his day there were no churches, few schoolhouses; and if they had preaching, it had to be in a private residence, and that his father's home was the preaching place for the circuit rider. Rev. Jack Burnett, a young man, was the preacher; and at his first

appointment all the neighbors were there to hear the new circuit rider. Chairs and slab benches were carried into the one big room for seats, and one big opening in the log wall had to answer for window as well as door for the house. The room was crowded with people, and one big, fat, baldheaded man, by the name of Brown, had to sit on the doorstep, there not being any room for him on the inside. Now this Mr. Brown was a sleepy-headed fellow, and every time he sat down and had to keep quiet he would drop off into a sleep and snore and nod, very much to the amusement or annoyance of his neighbors. The preacher took his stand at the back of the room, opposite the door, looking very handsome with a new suit (coat, trousers, and vest) of yellow homemade jeans, the coat and vest profusely bound with red, giving him a very important if not a clerical look. Well, everything had gotten along very well. The preacher was giving great satisfaction, and was about half through his sermon. Brown was nodding, his head slowly dropping almost to the doorstep, then with a sudden snort would lift himself straight again for another snooze.

The preacher saw him—could not help but see him—and heard his loud snoring, but Brown's sleeping and nodding were nothing new to the rest of the congregation. Now the Lewises had a pet sheep, an old ram, and the bad boys had taught him to butt and fight, and he was always ready for a "butting match." If any one, friend or foe, shook his head at Billy, that was banter enough. He had right then a fight on hand or cowardly to back down or run. About this time that old ram came to the house from the pasture, wandered into the yard, listened for a moment to the strange, loud noise of the preacher, and then his eyes caught sight of the nodding Mr. Brown. The old ram eyed him for a moment, shook his head and tail, and looked as if he took Brown's nodding as a banter for a fight.

When Brown's head began to drop, the ram, with blood in his eyes, would rush toward him; but when Brown would lift his head back suddenly, the ram would beat a retreat. Each time the ram would get a little closer to his supposed antagonist. Mr. Brown's head started down again—the preacher was a witness to the contest—it went down in waves,

down by jerks; the ram was furious, and here he came; and just as Brown's head reached the point where he always brought it back with a jerk, the ram struck him "cha-biff," right on the naked, bald head. The blow could have been heard a hundred yards. Brown jumped and shouted at the top of his voice: "Good God Almighty! fire! the devil! house's a falling!" The preacher broke down, and the sermon and service came to a premature and abrupt close.

Honesty! Nowhere do you find people more prompt in meeting their obligations than you will find among the majority of the mountaineers, and with most of them their word is their bond. A thief or a liar will be no more tolerated than a murderer. Of course, here and there, they are found, and some communities are largely made up of "fellows of the baser sort," but no more than in other sections of our country. Take the case of Ike Gordan. He was a farmer and a cattle trader. Cattle was scarce, the price low. He heard of a bunch of cattle across the mountain that belonged to a widow woman. He went to look at them, was pleased with their appear-

CAUGHT NAPPING—SQUIRE BROWN'S BUTTING BATTLE.

ance, and asked the owner her price, which was a little above what the market had been; but without returning a word, he bought and paid for them, and started with them to market. The woman was delighted with her trade. When the cattle trader returned from Baltimore, where he sold his cattle some ten days later, without stopping at his own home to rest, he went on to the home of the widow across the mountain, called at the gate, and when the woman saw him she felt very uneasy for fear he was dissatisfied with the trade and had returned to rue the bargain. But what was her surprise when she was informed that the cattle market had gone up, and that he had made a much larger profit than he had expected, that he had not paid her enough, and actually added quite a sum to what he had already paid her. Now this is a fact, and when told to another cattle trader, and he was asked, "Now Gus, what would you have done under those circumstances?" he studied a moment, and replied: "Yes, Ike Gordan was a good, honest man; but I'll tell you, I have never bought any cattle that cheap."

The people of our mountain highlands are

noted for their hospitality. They are careful to entertain strangers. They will divide the last morsel with a friend, and their doors are always open to those who need shelter. I have known them during their protracted religious services to feed and sleep in their beds or on pallets on the floor as many as it was possible to crowd into their homes. As to the charge commonly brought against the natives that they are lacking in enterprise and industry, while there may be a modicum of truth in it, as a whole the accusation should be taken as false. They are not in haste to get rich; besides, much that some people call up-to-date or modern is extremely distasteful to them. But they are not lazy. A majority of them are content with plain living and moderate exercise. To be sure they are not any more ambitious to "harass the soil or to provoke a sweat" than their brethren of the more populous centers; but it is not because of indolence or want of energy that they do not put their own timber on the market or mine the rich veins of coal, but want of capital. Not so much a want of energy as money. They are only anxious to avoid the two ex-

tremes—poverty and riches. Debt is as much a bugaboo as toil, and between the dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, the prospective fortune or bankruptcy, and excessive toil with its consequent burdens, they choose the more tranquil and peacefully easy method of letting every day provide for itself. They go on the idea that small vessels must stay near the shore. A burned child dreads the fire. And rather than tempt the goddess of fortune at an outlay of great and painfully unpleasant labor, they prefer to remain sweetly contented with their lot. They are very much like the Boston merchant who, in the spring of 1870, went to Colorado to visit his brother on his ranch and hunt buffalo. After a few days' rest, he put on his handsome hunting accouterments and started out with his brother in search of big game. "George," said his brother Jim, when they had gotten well started on the hunt, "now I have been out here for several years and know all about the buffalo, and I want to give you some advice. Whenever you shoot and kill one buffalo, it stampedes the whole herd, and they will run over and trample you to death unless you can get out of the way.

Now when we find the buffalo we must not shoot until we can get to where we can run, as soon as we do shoot, to a tree or place of safety and climb out of danger. Don't forget that, and do just as I tell you." Well, it was not long before they sighted an immense herd some distance ahead in the open plain. They cautiously sidled around until they got between the buffalo and a clump of trees, and they slowly advanced on the browsing beasts until they got within shooting range; then they both fired, taking good aim at a big buffalo apiece, and down went a prize for each; but here came the stampeded herd. Both men turned and ran for the trees at break-neck speed. But the ranchman outran the city brother, and passing a hole in the ground he shouted back to George that if he saw that he could not make it to the trees to take refuge in that hole. So when George came to the hole he darted down into it; but Jim reached the trees, climbed up to a safe place on the limbs, and looked out to see if his brother was safe; when lo! George was scrambling with all his might to get out of the hole, and he shouted to him, "Go back,

"Go back, George; here come the buffaloes!"

"Go back, the devil! There are two of the biggest bears down in that hole you ever saw!"

George, go back! Here comes the buffalo!" "Go back the devil! There are two of the biggest bears in that hole you ever saw!" So the mountaineer dreads the hole, for he knows that many of the enterprises which may develop wealth can likewise bring disaster and ruin.

Among these people you will find the elements of strong manhood. They are a brave, fearless people, but not savage, as they have sometimes been pictured by their traducers. Such men as Pleas Taylor, of Fentress county, and Lee Taylor, of White county, were not only living examples of good morals and good citizenship, but their very names were a terror to evil doers. The noted bandits, Champ Ferguson and Tinker Dave Baty, who kept up a regular guerrilla warfare from 1860 to 1865 on the Cumberland Mountain between Kentucky and Tennessee, both feared and respected the Taylors. The writer knew Tinker Dave Baty, the famous outlaw, and was at a religious service some years after the war where the bandit knelt, weeping, at the altar for prayers. In a conversation after the service, in speaking of the

Taylors, "O," he said, "they are good, true men." And not only the Taylors, but I could mention hundreds of others, from the Virginia and North Carolina down into the Georgia and Alabama mountains—the Senters, Bakers, Fords, Haleys, Johnsons, Carneses, Bristows, Renfros, Hills, Browns, Morgans, Kimmers, Mathises, Hixons, Smiths, Ramseys, Mayses, and many others. The home life of these people, while it is without affectation and simple, yet it is tender, pure, and good. The men are knightly and gallant toward the fair sex, and the women are modest and fairly neat. While occasionally you will find at wide intervals an elegant home, yet the majority live in the plainest and most simple manner. Husbands are considerate and attentive, while the wives are industrious, virtuous, and good. A divorce suit is exceedingly rare, and virtue among women, young and old, is prized above gold. Of course we could not expect to find the men all saints or the women all angels; but purity of living, pleasant home life, is to be found in most of their cabin homes. To be sure there are exceptions. Ben Vexen and wife, for example, give a striking contrast to

the vast majority of their mountain neighbors. Ben was given a college education to fit him for a professional life, perhaps the ministry, but his hearing and bad temper spoiled all that. He married Mary Jane Limestone, and settled over in the mountains of North Carolina. They were both high-strung, and when they were mad at each other it was a cat and dog life; but when they were in a good humor, displayed as much sweetness and affection for each other as some silly women do for their pet pug dog. Sometimes they would not speak for months; then again their best friend might call, but they would be so much interested in each other that they could give him but little attention. Some years after their marriage, during one of their sweet, loving times, they went to visit her brother, Bill Limestone. It was in the afternoon, and the brothers-in-law were out in the long, shady porch. Bill Limestone was lying stretched out on a bench, and Vexen was walking nervously up and down the porch, hands up to his ears, and both were talking of their married life. Ben Vexen was a truthful man, but was always very emphatic and frank when

he was excited. With both hands to his ears and in a stooping posture, he walked up close to his brother-in-law and said: "Bill Limestone, when your sister Mary Jane and I first married I just felt like I could eat her up, and I've wished a thousand times since I had." But are there not many husbands and wives living on High street in many of our fashionable cities whose love for each other is no greater than Ben Vexen and his Mary Jane?

Even in the mountains they have their backwoods settlements, which present as great a contrast to the ordinary mountaineer as the uncivilized backwoods countryman does to the polished city gentleman. In such communities their habits of dress, manners, speech are very primitive, and their ideas of virtue, temperance, and morality are about as loose as is the crudest specimen of heathendom. There is a community on the head waters of Tug River, away out on the Laurel Fork, where many years ago the Hardshell Baptists held an Association and most of the visiting preachers were entertained by the local pastor. Now the preachers of that almost extinct denomination, like many of their followers,

would imbibe too freely of "Indian fire water" occasionally, just for their stomach's sake, and the local pastor had prepared for the occasion by procuring a good-sized keg of "mountain dew," or apple brandy. On Sunday afternoon all the preachers, including the pastor, had been partaking very freely of the contents of that keg. They were sitting under some shade trees in the yard fronting the single log cabin. The keg was in an old "meat smokehouse" back of the dwelling, and whenever one of the brethren felt a little thirsty he would just walk back to the smokehouse and help himself. Between drinks they indulged in telling frightful ghost stories, dreadful tales about the devil, blood-curdling dreams, and hairbreadth escapes from dangers, and had filled up on so much of the apple brandy that their brains were dizzy and their bodies limber. It was getting dusk; the time for the night preaching was near at hand. The long, black shadows from the tall mountain peaks had thrown their somber mantles across the deep gorge of the valleys, the plaintive moan of the chilly evening zephyrs through the tall pine forests, the lonesome hoot of the big

night owl, the chirp of the crickets from beneath the near-by stones, the buzz of the beetle, and the startling flash of the firefly but added to the gloom that already haunted their reeling brains and made the stories of ghosts and goblins seem all the more real. They must have one more draught of the "convivial" beverage before they start for the church, but lo! no one was able to rise from his seat or walk to the smokehouse. Who will bring the keg to them? For not one of the seven or eight preachers, on account of the swimming condition of their heads, felt able to make the trip. The little ten or twelve year old daughter, who had been listening to all the frightful dreams and goblin stories, and whose mind in the fast-gathering darkness was already filled with childish dread, was commanded by her father to go and bring the almost emptied keg to the now helpless but thirsty crowd. With much reluctance, timidity, and fear the child started for the smokehouse; but when she reached the door and gazed into the darkness within, what did she see? A scream! and then with breathless fright she dashed back to inform the

now drunken but excited revelers that the devil was in the smokehouse. There was a large, timid old sheep, an old wether, with black spots and big horns, that belonged to the family; and while the sheep was very shy and was not about the house much, in the absence of the family at church that day it had stolen into the open smokehouse for shelter and to lick the salty dirt; but the child in her fright had forgotten they ever owned a sheep, and with her excited and distorted imagination she could see in the flashing eyes, long horns, black and white spots of the sheep the very image of the old devil himself. They tried to make her go back and bring the keg, but no, she would not go. Then they began to discuss the question. Some argued that it was a ghost; some, a bear; and others, the devil. She described it again, and then they all "tumbled" to the conclusion that it was his Satanic majesty. O yes, the majority said, it must be the devil; but who will go and get the whisky, while the devil is standing right by the keg? They were all afraid except one old thirsty clergyman, who excitedly declared that he was not afraid of the devil. After

much effort he struggled to his feet and totteringly moved toward the dreaded, haunted smokehouse. When he reached the door he caught to the facing on either side to steady himself preparatory to stepping inside, when the now frightened sheep made a plunge for liberty and the door. It darted between his legs, he fell across its woolly back, and out went sheep, preacher, and all, pellmell down the hill; and as the excited, bleating wether carried him near his companions in its flight, he shouted back to them sadly: "Take care of yourselves, brethren; the devil's got me!"

Allow me to mention one other character: the Mountain Liar. You can get on the mountains almost anything in the way of a man that you want, from the most elegant Christian gentleman down to the lowest human monstrosity. If you are looking for the regular, full-grown "greeny," with all of his backwoods drapery, both in dress and dialect, he is there. If you should be in search of the full-fledged "social fool," or the fantastic, wide-mouthed brag, just send in your order, and some enterprising "Yankee mountaineer" will produce him "posthaste." Just as we

"Take care of yourselves, brethren; the devil's got me!"

find in the forest the dwarfed oak and the tallest pine growing side by side, so we can find among the citizens of the "hill country" the little dwarfed tattler as well as the big, overgrown liar and "blow-hard." One of these well-poised, keen-scented, "know-it-all" kind of creatures, that can reveal to you all the secrets of nature, whose head is a regular depot of "stored facts," and who is never surprised at anything he hears or sees, is ever and anon bobbing up as you travel through the mountains. Surprise him? Never. He has always seen something better, bigger, or more terrible than you have. Give him information? Why, he knew all about it; was there when it occurred. Can't tell him anything that he does not know already.

Bishop H. N. McTyeire says that when he was in Texas some years ago he had to drive overland quite a distance to reach an inland town, where he was to preside over a Conference, and just as he entered the mouth of a long lane he discovered a large number of cattle mired up in what seemed to be a very small mud hole. He saw at a glance that by himself he could do nothing to extricate

them, so he drove as rapidly as he could to a house that he could see in the distance. When he got near to the house he saw a man standing in the door, wearing a broad-brim, cowboy hat, his hand shading his eyes, and a broad grin on his face, his whole countenance betraying a landscape picture of Texas wonders. When the Bishop got near enough, though almost out of breath, he shouted to the indifferent but smiling Texan: "Say, Mister, right back yonder at the mouth of this lane I saw fifteen or twenty of your cattle mired up in a little bit of a mud hole." "O, pshaw! that's nothing," said the Texan, "I've seen millions in a heap less place than that."

But the mountain liar is a harmless, innocent kind of being. He does not mean to hurt any one, for he does not lie for profit. The only harm he does is to himself; it's not to worst his neighbor. There is such seeming self-satisfaction in telling things he knows nobody will believe. He does not indulge in little discrepancies; it's got to be a "whopper" if he has anything do with it.

There was old man Ludd, who lived in

a small cottage in the outskirts of a mountain village; and he had lived there the oldest inhabitant knew not how long. He was a rather low man, square built, with low forehead, little, keen, black eyes, short, stingy ears, rather dish-faced, half-pug nose, broad, compressed, bulldog mouth, and nearly aways with a clean-shaved or closely clipped beard. When he talked to any one he always threw his head and shoulders back, locked his short, chubby hands behind him, stood first on one foot and then on the other, and assumed the attitude of one who had great and important news to impart. And you could pay him no higher compliment than to take the time to listen. Mr. Ludd knew everybody in the country for miles around, and his reputation had reached far beyond his personal acquaintance. He always used the word "remarkable," and pronounced it with a slow, measured dignity that betokened careful measurement of what he was telling. "Colonel Kelly" had given him a little pig. He fattened it, and at the proper time the young porker was butchered. So when the "Colonel" passed the next

time after "pig killing," he hailed him: "Good morning, 'Kernal Kelly!' "

"Good morning, Mr. Ludd; I see you've killed your pig, Mr. Ludd. Was it fat?"

" 'Fat,' did you say, Kernal Kelly? Why, sir, it was so fat we could only save the hams and shoulders; the midlings, we could not use them."

"Why," said the 'Colonel,' "how much did the pig weigh, Mr. Ludd?"

"Well, sir, it weighed by our scales just even one hundred pounds; and, Kernal, how much lard do you suppose we got out of that pig?"

"I do not know, Mr. Ludd; how much lard did you get?"

"Why, sir, we got one hundred and fifty pounds. Was not that remarkable, Kernal?"

"It certainly was, Mr. Ludd," said the "Colonel," as he hastily rode on.

A Remarkable Cow.

Mr. Ludd was out early one morning feeding a nice young cow he owned, when Colonel Kelly passed.

"That is a fine-looking cow you have, Mr. Ludd. Is she a good milker?"

THE MOUNTAIN LIAR.

"Why, sir, she gives milk by the tub. We supply all our neighbors and give our hogs as much as they want besides. 'Butter,' did you say? Why, sir, we sell all the merchants will take from us, give it to our neighbors when they want it, and have to throw away lots of it."

"Why, Mr. Ludd, she is a very remarkable cow," said the Colonel.

" 'Remarkable?' " Why, did you know, Kernal Kelly, that that cow never had a calf?'"

"She never? Why, that's wonderful," said the Colonel.

"Indeed she never, Kernal; and what is more remarkable about this cow is that her mother before her never had a calf!"

Badly Mixed.

Mr. Ludd one fall had killed his hogs, but had no pot or kettle in which to render his lard, so he went out some distance in the country and borrowed from Captain Hawk.

"All right, Mr. Ludd, you can have one of my small kettles (I've killed my first bunch of hogs, and will not kill any more until after

Christmas), just so you bring it home before I want to kill my other hogs."

"All right, Captain Hawk; I'll bring it back in time for you."

But when Christmas came, Mr. Ludd had not returned the kettle. The Captain sent word by one of the hired hands for Mr. Ludd to bring the kettle, that he was going to kill hogs; but the kettle did not go back to Captain Hawk that winter. It went on until the next fall, and when the Captain began making preparations for hog-killing, he found his kettle still absent. He put a man on a horse and told him to go in haste and tell Mr. Ludd that he was going to kill hogs to-morrow, and he needed and must have the kettle. But the kettle did not come. The day arrived, but not the kettle. The Captain was mad. He mounted his horse and started posthaste for Mr. Ludd's. Mr. Ludd was standing on one foot in the door, his head and shoulders were thrown back, hands locked behind him, his mouth open, and he wore a severe look of expectancy.

The Captain looked flushed when he rode up to the gate. "Look here, Ludd," said he,

pointing his finger angrily at the remiss borrower. "Sir, I want my kettle."

"Now you look here, Captain Hawk; I want to say to you, sir, in the first place that I never got your 'derned' old kettle; in the second place, it was cracked when I did get it; and in the third place, I took it home just as soon as I got done with it."

CHAPTER II.

As Wise as Solomon.

"A little learning" may be "a dangerous thing," but to be wise like Solomon is a gift that all should covet. Of all the kings of the earth, none during his life attracted so much attention or left behind him at his death such widespread and immortal memory as Solomon. The splendors of his reign, his temple and his palaces, his kingdom, crown, and robe, like all earthly greatness, have passed away like a theatrical pageant from the stage; but the memory of his wisdom gives a halo of glory to his name that time has never yet been able to efface. In the Canary Islands the Peak of Tenerife stands nearly twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea, and the seamen tell us at what an enormous distance it may be descried, and over how many miles of ocean, with its feet below the waves and its head above the clouds, it flings its long shadows. Such a place Solomon filled among men. Gifted by nature with noble intellect, healthy body, and with added

induement of wisdom from God, Solomon may well be pronounced the wisest of men. His proverbs give us an insight to the depth of his thought and the sweep of his lofty imagination. The Bible gives us some idea of his intellectual resources in its description of the wonderful temple which he built at an outlay of more than a billion of dollars, the magnificence of his palace, the equipage of his royal person, his commerce on land and sea, the extent of his kingdom, and the shrewdness of his diplomacy. All the kings of the earth paid tribute to him, and courted his favor, and the fame of his wisdom was the wonder of the world. In Persian literature today, as well as in the legendary lore of the East, Solomon and his wisdom, we are told, form a very conspicuous part of it. The Queen of Sheba made a long pilgrimage to witness the grandeur of his temple and to hear with her own ears the wisdom that fell from his lips. The wonderful stories she had heard seemed too fabulous to be true; but when each returning caravan brought back to her distant palace tales still more wonderful, her curiosity led her to resolve to see him.

And when with her own eyes she had gazed on that temple whose splendors had never been surpassed, that palace with its beautiful tapestry and gold, and whose king was robed with such garments of beauty, and saw the wisdom and magnificence of his kingdom, she exclaimed, "The half has not been told me!"

Aside from the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, which form a part of the Old Testament Scriptures we have legends of Solomon, which give us some idea of the fame he acquired for wisdom. According to tradition, he was the founder of natural history. Legends say that he learned the speech of birds and beasts, studied the languages and habits of insects, and was conversant with trees and flowers. Says the Bible: "He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." Geology, botany, ichthyology, and natural history: that simple statement of the inspired writer gives us a glimpse of the vast range of Solomon's studies, which may well excite our wonder and admiration, espe-

cially when we remember that this remarkable man devoted himself to these pursuits amid the temptations of an Eastern court, the cares of commerce, and the distractions and vast enterprises of a kingdom. His life formed a rare chapter in the history of kings. Its parallel would be difficult to find; but a wiser than Solomon tells us that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies of the field, that neither toil nor spin; and a wiser far than Solomon, in both his earthly wisdom and kingly glory, is the man, however poor or unlearned he may be, who "seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." His proverbs are like "apples of gold in pictures of silver," and should be labeled the "Philosophy of the Wisest of Men." They ought to be a part of the curriculum in every school, and no boy's education should be considered complete until he thoroughly studies and memorizes the "proverbs of the wise man."

But what are some of the things he did, not said, which gave to him such reputation for wisdom? Take the Bible story of the two women coming early next morning

after Solomon's dream and prayer, and the promise God had given him, not only of wisdom, but of riches and glory. They bore in their arms a babe, and were followed, no doubt, by a multitude eager to see and hear the young king's decision. One of the babes was dead, and they were both clamoring for the living child. The women were perhaps of the lower type, and some time during the night the babe had died, and on awaking they both laid claim to the living, and both denied being the mother of the dead child. They had quarreled over the child, the neighbors were unable to settle the dispute, and finally they concluded to abide by King Solomon's decision as to who should have the living child. The king, whose presence, according to Eastern custom, was open to his meanest subject, sat on the judgment seat. These women of disreputable character, bearing a dead and a living child, approached, each telling her own tale of wrongs and woes and clamoring loudly for justice, each claiming the living and refusing to own the dead child. There being no evidence in the case other than their own unsupported assertions, the spectators were at a loss which

to believe, the infamous life of both making the one as little worthy of credit as the other. The problem was well calculated to put the king's sagacity to the test; and they waited with eager curiosity to see how he would decide. But horrors! they were struck with astonishment and stood aghast, and what unhappiness did they anticipate to themselves and their country when Solomon opened his lips to pronounce a judgment apparently as foolish as it seemed cruel! The knot he was unable to untie he would cut. He called for a sword, commanding that the living child be divided, and a half given to each. But how the horror of the people was turned to surprise and joy, and how they hurried from the court to publish Solomon's fame, and pronounce him the wisest of judges, when one of the women sprang forward with a scream, and, seizing the uplifted arm of the executioner, turned her face to the king to cry, "O, my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it!" He, having tested the matter by this appeal to nature, pointed to the trembling, weeping, pallid, horror-stricken suppliant and said: "Give her the living child; she is the

mother thereof." But legendary history gives other stories of his mental prowess and acumen.

Like the Queen of Sheba, many sought to test his sagacity with questions and tests. A lady presented herself at his court holding in her hand a beautiful bouquet of flowers. Holding them so the king could see but not handle them, she asked if they were natural or artificial. He gazed a moment, and seeing that if they were artificial they were so symmetrically and perfectly made, in color and shape, that they were true imitations or types of the natural blossom, he was puzzled to decide. But his mother wit saved him. He commanded her to lay them on the ground; he watched them for a few moments, and then, to their astonishment and the wonder of those present, he pronounced them artificial; and they were, but how did Solomon know it? O, he was a wise observer. He noticed that the honey bee, flitting here and there in his flowery yard, would sail by those blossoms and never give them a passing notice, while upon more unpromising blooms it alighted. Hence his quick reply, and so his tester and

astonished auditors went forth, not knowing how Solomon had reached his conclusion, to proclaim his wisdom.

Here is another test. For example, on one occasion a band of fair boys and stout girls of the same size and age and all dressed exactly alike were brought to him, and to test his skill he was required to say which were boys and which were girls. He solved the problem in a moment. Ordering water to be brought, he directed them all to wash; and noticing as they washed how one class vigorously scrubbed while another careful of their beauty but gently stroked their faces with the water, he solved the enigma, and instantly pronounced the first to be boys and the second girls. And thus his fame spread among his own people and to the ends of the earth.

Solomon's reputation for being a wise man had a solid foundation, but alas! how many reputations for sagacity rest upon a mere shadow for a basis. Learning or knowledge is not wisdom. An ounce of mother wit is worth more than a pound of knowledge. Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. It is the proper application and direction of intelligent

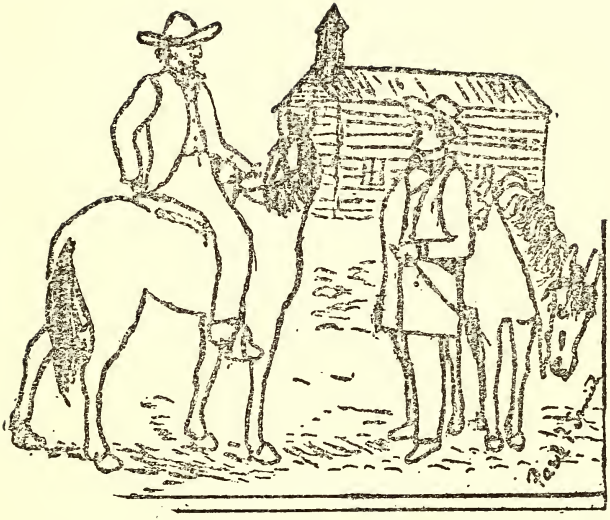
information. Many a man has had the reputation of being as wise as an owl who has likewise possessed all the stupidity of that solemn and sedate bird. Genius or wisdom sometimes takes one direction and sometimes another. It does not always go in straight lines. At one time it is offensive; at another it is defensive. It is a trite but true saying that "necessity is the mother of invention." The mind is very active, especially when the stomach with imperial authority makes demands, or ambition is the motive power. Many a man finds himself in straits, as did Solomon, when tried or tested, and but few have the sagacity to extricate themselves as did the wise king. But now and then we run across a case almost as marvelous as Solomon's tests and equally as triumphant in its solution.

There is the case of old Parson Chrismond, who was a native of the Virginia mountains, and when he married he entered into a contract with his wife that he would never ask her to move from her home in Burk's Garden, Va., and she was not to hinder him from going where his Conference or bishop would send him. In his old days he was sent to a circuit

in the mountain districts of lower East Tennessee, several hundred miles from his wife and children. His circuit was a hard one, embracing many appointments in the rural districts, and at some of his preaching places he had to preach on week days. When he reached one of these week-day appointments, say it was Thursday, he found quite a large congregation for a mid-week service. He being the new preacher and a stranger, it was natural for him to expect some of his members to meet and give him a welcome, or at least introduce themselves. But no one came to meet or speak to him. He went into the church, the congregation gathered, listened with attention and respect to his sermon; and as soon as the benediction was pronounced and the people felt themselves dismissed, they quietly left the church, and not a soul went to speak to the preacher or invite him to their homes. The preacher stood around for a while, and then picking up his saddlebags he started for his horse. On his way to his horse he passed a man, about the last one left on the ground, and he was just in the act of mounting to ride away. Brother Chrismond walked up to him,

reached out his hand, and said: "Brother, what is your name?" "Green," answered the man. "Are you a member of the Church?" "O, yes; I am the class leader," said Brother Green. "Ah, indeed; I am glad to meet you, Brother Green. Come and go home with me for dinner, Brother Green." "Why," said Brother Green, "I don't care. But where do you live, parson?" "Why," said the preacher, "in Burk's Garden, Va." "How far is that from here?" "O, about four hundred miles," said Parson Chrismond. "O, pshaw!" said Green, "we could not get there in two weeks. You come home with me and get dinner." "All right," said Parson Chrismond; and the preacher got his dinner. The congregation needed a lesson on politeness and Christian courtesy, such as another Solomon gave to one of his congregations.

At considerable expense and long horse-back rides he had filled his appointment twice, and not a single man or woman had asked for an introduction or given him an invitation to eat a meal in their houses. When he returned to fill his third appointment he found a larger congregation than usual. So he introduced



"Go home with me for dinner, Brother Green."
"Where do you live, Brother?"
"In Burk's Garden; about four hundred miles from here."

his services in the following unique manner: "My friends, I discover that you are unused to religious services in this neighborhood; so before I begin the services to-day, I will tell you how you must do. Now, in the first place, when you come out here for preaching, you must hitch up your horses securely, then quietly come into the house; the men will sit over here on my left, the women on the right. Then I will start a song, a voluntary; you will all join in, and we will sing it while sitting. Then I will get up and line out a hymn, and we will all stand up and sing it. Then I will say, 'Let us pray,' and you will all kneel down; and when I say 'Amen,' you get up and resume your seats. Then I will read a chapter from the Bible; you all sit still, look at me and listen, not making any noise; then we will sing another song, you all sitting perfectly still, but joining in the song. Then I will get up, take a text of Scripture, and preach a sermon of about thirty minutes' length, you keeping your seats and listening attentively. When I finish the sermon, we will sing another song and have another prayer, all kneeling. Then I will make my announcements, we will all

stand and sing the doxology, and I will pronounce the apostolic benediction; and just as soon as I pronounce the word 'Amen,' you all come to the pulpit, shake hands with the preacher, and invite me home with you to dinner." It is useless to say he was invited that time.

We must not lose sight of the fact that while Solomon was a great king, the wisest and richest of men, he was also a preacher (see Eccl. i. 1-12); and that may account for the fact that, while not many preachers ever do get to be kings or possess great riches, some of them get to be very wise. There was Lorenzo Dow, a very eccentric but wise preacher, who lived a kind of nomadic life, vibrating from Maine to Mississippi, from America to Europe, away back in the early days of the nineteenth century. Dow and his wife, Peggy, traveled horseback all over the United States, preaching wherever it suited him, but never having any church or pastorate. He would leave his appointments scattered along over the country, and sometimes they would be two and three years apart, but he would rarely fail to meet

his engagements or to be there on time. His seeming eccentricities, his native ability as a pulpit orator, and his unfailing promptness to keep his engagements always secured for him a multitude of hearers. One hundred years ago Lorenzo Dow's name was a household word in all parts of the east and south of the United States, and that name was a synonym for purity, ability, singularity, and goodness. Everybody knew or had heard something of the strange but wonderful preacher, and was always ready, no matter what the distance might be, to go and hear him. The churches or schoolhouses of that day would rarely accommodate the crowds that wanted to hear him; so he would have to preach in the woods, street, or in some shaded arbor. He would sometimes select a rock or tree as the place, and then tell the people that on such a day at eleven o'clock two years or three years from that time he would preach under that tree or on that rock. So the people would talk about it and publish that Dow would preach at that tree or rock on such a day; and before the day rolled around, the people for many miles in every direction knew all about it, and the fact

of his coming was the most exciting topic of conversation. In a certain neighborhood in East Tennessee, where the people were not noted for their piety or friendliness to the preachers, Dow left an appointment to preach. He was to preach on a rock under a certain tall pine tree, and the appointment was of three years' standing, and the sermon, the day, and the preacher had been the theme of every home and gathering for three years. It was during the time of the Millerite excitement about the end of the world. On the evening before the day of his appointment to preach, Dow rode into the community, and, passing near the pine tree under which he was to preach, he met a negro boy blowing a trumpet. "Hello, my little man," said Dow, "what is your name?" "Gabr'el, sir." "Well, Gabriel, what are you doing?" "O, nothing, sir, except blowing this horn." "What are you going to do to-morrow, Gabriel?" "I'se gwine to hear Lorenzo Dow preach, sir." "Well, Gabriel, that is right, and I am Lorenzo Dow, and I am going to preach to-morrow under that tree." "All right, sir, and I'se gwine to hear you preach sure enough." Dow pulled

out a silver dollar and showed it to the negro, and said, "Gabriel, do you see this dollar?" "Yes, sir." "Well, Gabriel, if you will come out here early in the morning, before anybody gets here, bring that horn with you, and climb into the top of that pine, so no one can see you, and when I say 'Blow your trumpet, Gabriel,' you blow with all your might, I will give you this dollar." "Well, sir, dat dollar am mine; I'll do dat, certain."

Well, the day arrived, the crowds came from every direction, in wagons, buggies, horses, afoot; everybody was there—saints, sinners, rich, poor, black and white. The day was propitious, and the great multitude was anxious and interested. At the appointed hour, Dow was in the pulpit, and all eyes were fixed on the eccentric but wonderful preacher. His subject was "The Last Judgment." His tall form and pale, reverent face inspired awe, as if a visitor from another world. He talked of the day when the world would be burned up, the dead would arise, the great Judge descend, and when the living and dead, angels, men, and devils, should stand before God, and give an account for the deeds done

in the body. He talked of the proceedings of that awful day as depicted in the Bible; of the books that would be opened, the witnesses that would be called, and the final sentence of doom to the wicked, and of reward to the good.

The pathos of the man, the awfulness of the theme, had wrought his congregation to the highest pitch of excitement. In his peroration he painted the scenes of the last day as if it were the present and they were all eyewitnesses. The great white throne descends, and on it the great Judge, and with him all the angels of heaven; an angel is dispatched to stand with one foot on the land, the other on the sea, and with uplifted hand swears that time is, and time was, but time shall be no more! The dead are rising, the world is burning, and the stars are falling! The preacher pauses and gazes into the heavens, his long arm with bony fingers pointing upward, and begins to shout at the top of his voice: "Blow your trumpet, Gabriel! blow your trumpet, Gabriel!" At that the negro boy in the tree began to blow, the women to scream, the children to cry, and the men to run. For a mo-

"Blow your trumpet, Gabriel!"

ment pandemonium reigned. The excitement was intense. Some wept, some shouted, and some were pale with fright. It was some time before order could be restored and the preacher proceed with his discourse. Directly some one of the "baser sort" discovered the negro up in the tree, and wanted to shoot him. "O no," said the preacher; "but if that poor negro boy can scare you that way, how will it be when Gabriel shall blow the trumpet that shall sound the death knell of time, and the trumpet of God shall call you to his judgment bar?" It is said that multitudes were convicted and hundreds converted under that service. When all was over and Dow gone, that sermon, the blowing of the horn by the negro boy, the scene that followed, his unique method of impressing a much-needed lesson, but added to the fame of and admiration for their strange prophet.

Take another case. On his way to one of his appointments, and just a short while before the service was to begin, Dow rode by a cabin; and as he approached, he saw a man sitting on the fence, weeping. His wife and three or four small children were standing in

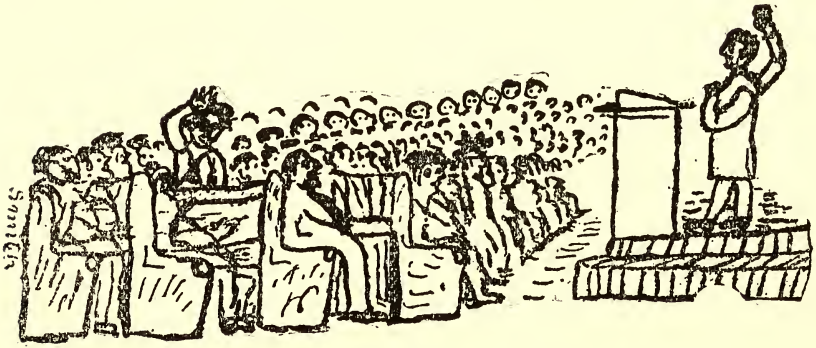
the door, and seemed to be in the deepest distress as well as poverty. Dow stopped his horse and spoke to the man, inquiring the cause of his trouble. The man looked up through his tears, and between sobs he said that some one had stolen his ax; that he was a poor man, and that the only means he had for making a living for his wife and children was by chopping wood for his neighbors; but now that his ax was stolen, he had not the means to buy another, and his family would have to suffer. Parson Dow's sympathies were aroused, and he said to the poor fellow: "I am going to preach up the road in a few minutes, and if you will go with me to church I will find your ax for you or I will give you money to buy another." The man consented. The preacher found a large audience waiting. He hitched his horse, hunted around until he found two good-sized rocks, put them in his pocket, and then walked into the pulpit, and placed the rocks on the stand in front of him and in full view of the congregation. He then preached a sermon on sin and its punishment. It was a fearful arraignment of wrongdoing, of profanity, lying, stealing, Sabbath-breaking,

and drunkenness. He showed that all thieves and liars would be turned into hell. His picture of the doom of the ungodly was fearful; and when the audience was wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement, and dread and fear were pictured on hundreds of upturned and weeping faces, he paused and told of the poor man who had lost his ax, picturing the man's distress and the poverty of his family. Then, raising his voice to a higher pitch, he exclaimed, "Somebody stole that ax!" He then told of the character and doom of that thief; that God would turn the bloodhounds of his wrath upon his track; that the thief was a cowardly wretch, who had gone under the cover of darkness and perpetrated the crime, and not only stolen the ax, but taken the very bread out of the mouths of that poor wife and her little children. "O, you thief! God will find you out!" Then the preacher paused. "But," said he, in almost a whisper, "that thief may be in this audience. If he is, it is a wonder that God does not strike him down, from where he sits, to the lowest hell. I wonder if he is here. I wonder if God will make me for the moment the minister of his wrath. I believe

that man is here to-day. If he is, I believe I can hit him with this rock." And here picking up the rock in his right hand, and assuming a belligerent attitude, he drew his arm back as if getting ready to throw, and then he made a motion as if to throw; and a man who had been watching his every movement, just as the preacher swung his arm into the attitude of throwing, dodged. "There! there!" shouted the preacher; "my friend, there is the man that stole your ax. Did you see him dodge?" And sure enough there was the thief, and the ax was restored.

The Rooster that Did Not Crow.

One night after Mr. Dow and his wife had retired, after a hard day's travel in the mountains of Virginia, a number of persons collected in the barroom to enjoy their usual revelries, as was the custom in that part of the country in those days. At a late hour in the night the alarm was given that one of the company had lost his pocketbook, and a search was proposed; whereupon the landlord remarked that Lorenzo Dow was in the house, and that if the money was there he knew that



"There's the man that got your ax; did you see him dodge?"

Dow could find it. The suggestion was received with approbation, and accordingly Mr. Dow was aroused from his slumbers and brought forth to find the money. As he entered the room his eyes ran through the company with searching inquiry, but nothing appeared that could fix guilt upon any one. The loser appeared with a countenance expressive of great concern, and besought Mr. Dow for heaven's sake to find his money. "Have any left the company since you lost your money?" said Mr. Dow. "None," said the loser, "none." "Then," said Lorenzo Dow to the landlady, "go and bring me your large dinner pot." This created no little surprise; but, as supernatural powers were universally conceded, his directions were immediately obeyed. Accordingly the pot was brought forward and set in the middle of the room. "Now," said Lorenzo, "go and bring the whitest rooster that you have at the barn." This was done, and at his direction the rooster was placed under the pot. "Let the doors now be locked, give me the keys, and blow out the lights," said Dow, and this was done. "Now let us form a circle around the pot, and we will

all march around. I'll sing a song, and every person in the room must rub his hand hard against the pot as we march around, and when the guilty hand touches the pot the rooster will crow." All formed in the circle, the preacher began the song, and the procession started; all marched around with stately tread, and rubbed or pretended to rub against the pot. But lo! the cock did not crow. "Let the candles now be lighted," said Lorenzo; "there is no guilty person here. If the man ever had any money, he must have lost it some place else. But stop," said Lorenzo, when the candles had been relighted, and all things prepared, "let us now examine the hands." This was the most important part of his arrangement; for, on examination, it was found that one man had not rubbed against the pot. The others' hands, being black with the soot of the pot, were a proof of their innocence. "There," said Lorenzo, pointing to the man with clean hands, "there is the man who picked your pocket!" The guilty culprit, seeing his detection, at once acknowledged his guilt, and gave up the money.

Did Solomon in all his wisdom ever untie a

knot like that? If Lorenzo Dow was not a very wise man, his character has been greatly belied.

Raising the Devil.

Almost any ordinary man can raise a racket, and some not even so ordinary. I have seen some little two-by-four husbands, one of the common, everyday kind of fellows, whose placid disposition and even-looking temper would not have excited the suspicion of the most wide-awake henpecking wife, raise a large family storm, with the quickness of the lightning's flash, all on account of a one-cent collar button that he himself had misplaced or his baby had swallowed. Who cannot get up a row? Why, the ordinary street bummer, with just a few sips of distilled corn juice, can sometimes disturb a whole settlement. As to "raising Cain," there are hundreds who, by their actions, seem to think that it is their special birthright privilege to raise that naughty gentleman; and if they should not happen to be the originator of any one particular "Cain-raising," they feel no special slight; they offer a helping hand, and contribute their talents

to a furtherance of the delightful scene. A dog fight will attract a bigger crowd than a funeral, and there are some men who would rather be in a fuss than to eat. They are like Jerome K. Jerome's Irishman, who, seeing a mob collecting in the street, sent his little girl out to ask if there was going to be a row, "cos, if so, father would like to be in it." O how these folks delight in social or family tempests! and then as for police "cyclones" and barroom "earthquakes," the fun is immense. I have seen very small things get up a very large rumpus. There is the little colicky babe that the poor tired mother has worried with until after midnight, when the irate lord of a husband would rise up, robed in his close-fitting nightshirt, take the little screaming angel in his tender and loving arms, and walk the floor, humming to it a lullaby song of very cruel "cuss" words. That great enemy of man, that torment of woman, though exceedingly small, how quick it, the flea, can raise a howl! And there is the little mahogany "bedbug," with its smooth, downy skin, short, chubby legs, and bad-smelling breath: let it start in its nightly rounds along the groove of your

spine, or tenderly finger about your neck, and what a scene, when on a cold night all the covering is thrown from your warm bed as you squirm in a desperate endeavor to reach the latest point of disturbance created by that particularly aggressive insect! Yes, some can raise one thing, some another; but it takes a different kind of fellow to raise a real devil.

Mr. Dow was once traveling through the mountains of Tennessee, and asked permission to spend the night at a farmhouse. The woman of the house told him that, her husband not being at home, he could not stay. He insisted that she should let him remain, as there was no other house near; but she positively refused until he told her he was a preacher, and would sleep in the stable if he could do no better. This information, together with his long beard and strange, prophet-like dress and appearance, at once suggested to her who he was, and she quickly inquired if he was not Lorenzo Dow. Being answered in the affirmative, she waived her objections, and concluded that he might stay—probably more out of fear that evil might befall her if she turned him off than out of a wish to have

him in her home. Accordingly Mr. Dow put up, and about the usual hour retired to bed in a back room, where he had not lain long when he heard a man arrive, who he soon discovered was not the woman's husband. A series of jokes commenced between the woman and the man, which continued with a good deal of hilarity until about midnight, when all of a sudden their pleasure was disturbed by a loud rap at the door which announced that the husband had arrived. Alarm and consternation followed. There was but one door, and at it stood the husband. To be caught there at that hour of the night would, to say the least of it, insure the visitor a terrible thrashing. To escape seemed impossible. At this critical juncture, when the ingenuity of man had failed, the quick perception of woman, as in most cases of emergency, found an expedient. At the foot of the bed stood a large barrel half full of raw cotton, in which she concealed the visitor. Then, turning around very composedly, she opened the door and received her husband. But his lordship had been to the grogshop and was in what the Irish schoolmaster called "an uproarious mood." "Hush,

"Raising the devil."

hush," said the wife, as the husband blundered in and roared out, "Thunder and potatoes, Mag! Why didn't you open the door?" "Hush, my dear, hush; Lorenzo Dow is in the house." "O, blood and tobacco! and is it Lorenzo Dow, the man who raises the devil?" "Sure it is, and why don't you be still?" "O, by St. Patrick, he shall come forth, and you shall see the devil before you sleep."

So Mr. Dow was compelled to come forth, and nothing would satisfy the husband but that Lorenzo must raise the devil. Dow urged his inability to perform such wonders, but no excuse would satisfy the uncompromising husband; he had heard that Dow could raise the devil, and now that he had him in the house he determined that he must. At length Dow said: "If you will stand in the door, and give him a few thumps as he passes, but not so hard as to break his bones, I will see if I can raise him." So saying, he took the candle in his hand, and, walking up and down the room, touched the candle to the cotton, and said, "Come forth, old boy!"—when out jumped the hidden gentleman all in a blaze, and, breaking for the door like a mass of living

fire, made good his escape; but not without first receiving a good rap over the shoulders from the husband's cudgel as he passed the threshold. The job was complete, the devil raised, and the strange preacher a great wonder!

CHAPTER III.

A Mountain Preacher.

If a man could have anything to do in the selection of a place to be born, or should be consulted in the location of the exact spot for his nativity, I do not know of any section preferable to Southwestern Virginia, unless it should be East Tennessee. If the mountains around about Jerusalem were not only an adornment to the city and its temple, lending an enchantment to the view of the visitor, but were as well a "joy to the whole earth," may not our native surroundings have much to do in shaping our character and lending a charm to our existence?

Robert Sawyer Sheffey, the hero of this sketch, was born July 4, 1819, in Wythe county, Va., in that famous valley of Cripple Creek, with its evergreen hills of blue grass, its narrow but fertile valleys, and its beautiful streams of crystal waters. Bob Sheffey was not the only celebrity that first saw the light in old Wythe county. Nancy Hanks, the mother of one of the most celebrated men of

America, the martyred President of these United States, Abraham Lincoln, was born and lived until she was sixteen or eighteen years of age just a few miles southeast of the old lead mines in Wythe county. Another celebrity born in old Wythe (notwithstanding Weber's School History of the Palmetto State) was the great South Carolina statesman, John C. Calhoun. The Hon. Isaac Leftwich, of Wytheville, told the writer that J. C. Calhoun was born in what is locally known as Monk's Corner, some ten miles northeast of Wytheville, and that when the lad was quite young his father moved to South Carolina, to put him, with his other children, in school to a brother-in-law, then quite a noted professor in that state. Colonel Leftwich, who gave me this information in 1885, and was then near ninety years of age, was a man of great intelligence, a lawyer of ability, a man of wealth and undoubted veracity. He said that he had been in the old Calhoun home, that the old buildings were still standing, and that the place was still known by the original owner's name. The celebrated William G. Brownlow, Tennessee's famous ex-Governor and

United States Senator, the ante-bellum slave defender and noted leader of the old Whig party, was another. Brownlow was a character in his day. It is said that old Father Akin, the Irish Methodist preacher and a very stanch Democrat, and who believed that it was treason to vote anything but the Democratic ticket, could not get along politically very well with Brownlow, though they were otherwise good friends; and Father Akin, when in Knoxville, would always stop with "Billy," as he called Brownlow. One night he and Brownlow had had a pretty stiff argument on some exciting political issue of that day, between Whigs and Democrats, but bedtime came at last without the matter being settled. The family were called in for prayers, and Father Akin conducted the worship. He prayed for the family, Sister Brownlow, all the children; and then paused and, in his broadest Irish brogue, said: "And, O Laird, bless Billy too; and grant, O Laird, that Billy may quit his Whagery." And Brownlow, in a low, gruff voice, responded: "God forbid!" There are others whose fame may not have been quite so broad, but have equally honored themselves in

State and national politics, or, like Jeb Stuart and Generals Floyd and Joe Johnston, on the far-famed battlefield. But what is to hinder a country that can produce the finest blue grass, the fattest shorthorn or Durham cattle, the best and richest milk and butter, with scenery unsurpassed, and women whose charms of beauty and grace are unequaled, from likewise giving to the world its best brands of the *genus homo*, the highest type of manhood? Whether blue grass makes human culture or not, the people who live among and own it always "look it." Nowhere on the face of the earth will you find more homes of plenty, culture, dignity, and refinement than among these lovely green hills of Southwest Virginia.

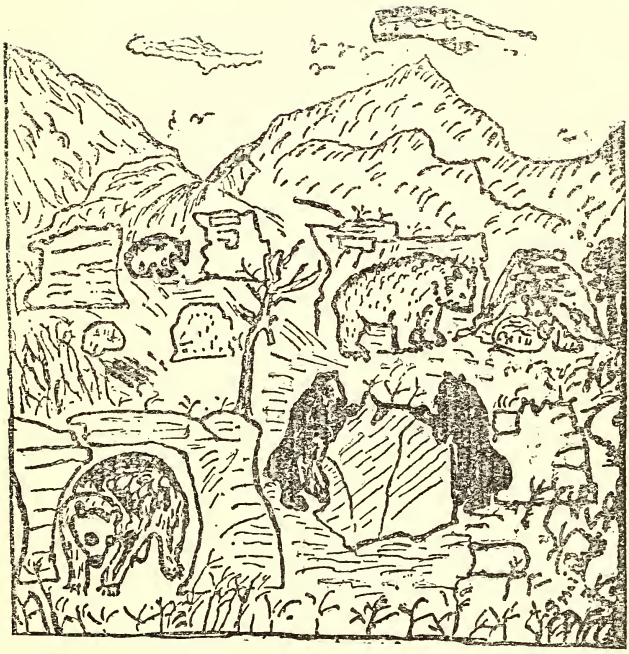
Babylon had its boasted hanging garden; but the world has seen nothing to compare with Burke's Garden, in Tazewell county, unless it was the garden of Eden. With its twenty thousand acres of smooth, level land; black, rich soil covered with a soft, velvety carpet of blue grass; with browsing herds and flocks; with here and there an elegant mansion, surrounded by beautiful and

shapely groves of sugar maple, and the whole garden entirely encircled with a girdle of lofty mountains—it is indeed a "garden of the gods," swinging nearly four thousand feet above the sea level, and fanned by the purest atmosphere, and overarched by the bluest, clearest skies the sun ever shone through, or above which stars ever sparkled. The city of Rhodes boasted of its Colossus; but long before Rhodes was built or its Colossus dreamed of, "Angel's Rest" in Giles, Natural Bridge in Rockbridge, Natural Tunnel in Scott, and the lofty Peaks of Otter, were standing in Virginia. Some countries have nothing to boast of but their antiquity and the age of their cities; but long before Rome was founded or Damascus had a tenant, "Beartown" in Tazewell was a flourishing city, doing a growling, hugging business.

The people in this section of our country are noted for their hospitality, and entertainment in their homes is always royal, for they are among the best livers and feeders in the world. Who ever baked lighter rolls, could prepare better meats, or make sweeter butter, than you will find at their tables? The "old

Virginia ham" is toothsome, and their broiled, juicy steaks are tempting.

I know of nothing more pleasing than the polite manners of an old Virginia gentleman, unless it is the sweet, unaffected elegance of a cultured, well-bred Virginia lady. With what ease and grace they receive you into their homes, making you feel a welcome at their table, bed, and fireside that is truly refreshing! This hospitality is not confined to one class; but all, rich and poor, those who live in the mansion as well as those who live in the cabin or hovel, extend the same generous welcome. Of course there, as elsewhere, you occasionally run across the skinflint and miser, who cares for nobody but himself, but such specimens are not indigenous to that soil. Even the poorest catch the spirit of hospitality, and sometimes display a willingness to entertain far beyond their means. A young clergyman who is now a prominent missionary in a foreign field, thinking it would be a good object lesson for his field of work to go back into the Virginia mountains and see how the home missionary performed his labors, made a trip with a presiding elder to the head waters of



OLDEST TOWN IN THE WORLD, BEARTOWN—TAZEWELL, VA.

the Sandy River. They were hard pressed to find a place to spend the night in the sparsely settled sandy country, but finally found a cabin where the inmates agreed to take them in, "as they were preachers." When the supper came on, the two tired and hungry travelers sat down at the crude and roughly furnished table. The old elder asked a blessing, and the good housewife told them to help themselves. She then turned to the well-dressed young prospective missionary, and with a bland, kind smile said: "Will you have coffee, stranger?" "Yes, madam, if you please." "Will you have sugar and cream, stranger?" "Yes, madam, if you please." "Well now, stranger, I'm sorry, but we ha'n't it!" Of course there were mutual regrets; it was only poverty that kept the preacher from the cream and sugar, and not want of largeness of heart upon the part of the hostess.

This story reminds me of an opposite character, old man Skinflint, who lived on the pike leading back from the railroad toward the West Virginia mountains. There were three brothers, all preachers and promi-

nent men, who had been boys with Skinflint. One of them had soldiered and messed with him for four years in the Confederate army, and had been his chaplain, and Skinflint professed great fondness, love, and admiration for his boyhood chum and playmate, and army companion as well as chaplain. Well, these brothers found leisure to visit their old father and mother, who lived in an humble home in an adjoining county back of Skinflint's. When they reached the depot nearest their destination, they secured horses, and after a few hours' delay started on their long horseback ride to see the "old folks at home." It was the middle of the afternoon when they left the railroad station, and they would have to stop over somewhere for the night. Being preachers, they were not flushed with money, and it was a question where they would stay. Then the army chaplain happened to think that his old army friend lived on the road they were traveling, and that he would be glad to see them, as they were boys together and he had been in the army with him and was his chaplain. He said: "I'll insure you, brothers, that Mr. Skinflint will not charge us a cent for

our night's lodging." Late that evening they reined up their tired horses at his gate, and called. Skinflint came to the door, they made themselves known, and there were handshakings and happy greetings. They asked if he could keep them. "Certainly. Get down, brothers, and come right in; and when you rest a little, we'll go out and cut some clover and oats for your horses. I'm glad to see you."

They got down, removed their saddles, and were introduced to the family; and then Skinflint and the three preachers went to the barn, put up the horses, and with scythe and cradle went to the oat field and cut the oats, and then went back to the clover patch and cut their hay, and with rude fork and their arms they carried the feed to their hungry horses. Then all went to the branch, took a good wash, and went back to the house for a short rest before supper. Now the old army chaplain was a good singer, and nothing would do Skinflint but he must sing him one of the old "camp hymns" before supper. He sung, the others joining him. Supper was not quite ready, and he would have time to sing

another; "and it would be a great satisfaction to me," said Skinflint. The chaplain sung, and Skinflint was delighted. It brought back memories of the old camp service and the old "mess tent" prayer meeting, and he seemed to be overjoyed. Supper was announced. The tired preachers were glad to get a respite from singing; besides, they were very hungry. Old times were talked over, childhood romps, the happy days they had all spent together; then the chaplain's and Skinflint's war record was referred to, and in memory they lived all again.

Supper over, all went back to the sitting room, and Skinflint had thought of another old song he wanted the chaplain to sing. He sung it, and then another and another, on up to eleven o'clock. Then they had prayers, after which Skinflint wanted the chaplain to sing one more song for the benefit of his wife; and then, it being near midnight, the preachers excused themselves, and Skinflint showed them to a room and went with them to see that the beds were all right; and while he was looking after the beds, he wanted the chaplain to please sing just one more of the

old songs, and he would retire. He sung it for him and went to bed, and Skinflint also retired.

He called them up by daylight the next morning to help cut feed for their horses. This being done, and another wash taken at the branch, they went to the house, and the chaplain sung until breakfast. After breakfast, the chaplain had to sing a song that Skinflint had just thought of, and when he was through with the song they all went for the horses; and when they were ready to start, Skinflint said he would like for all to come into the house, and he would call in the family and have just one more song. The preachers consented, as the old man was so kind. Then, bidding the wife and children good-by, they with Skinflint went out to the horses. "We must go now, Brother Skinflint. What do you charge us for our night's lodging?" (They just asked to save their manners, for they were sure, after the warm reception he had given them, that he would not charge them anything.) "Well, brethren, bein' it's you, I'll have to knock off a leetle, and just make your bill three dollars!" It paralyzed

them, but they paid it. The chaplain said he had done twenty-five dollars' worth of singing, and it would be the last time he would sing and pay for the privilege besides. But few such men as Skinflint live in the blue grass hills.

But to return to the subject of this sketch. Bob Sheffey was born on the 4th of July, 1819, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence; and Brother Sheffey always considered it an honor, and prophetic of his own career, for he was a free lance, and his life was a perfect declaration of independence, in thought, word, and action. He never had but one master, and that was, as he expressed it, "sweet Jesus." He said he was born twice: the first time, July 4, 1819, as Robert Sawyer Sheffey; the second time, at old Cripple Creek camp meeting, he was born again, and became a "Christian." He was born of respected and well-to-do parents, and was one of several children. Two or three of his brothers were lawyers and attained prominence in their profession, leaders at the bar and on the bench. "Robert" had opportunities for a good education, but his aversion to

books and hard study was very much in his way. He mastered the ordinary branches of an English education, but his early dislike for books and aversion for profound study have followed him all through his long and eventful life. One book he loved, and it was the constant companion of his life, "a lamp unto his feet, a light unto his path"—the Bible. The Bible and his hymn book—for he was a lover of song, and in his younger days his strong, clear voice could be heard for miles as he sung, "Away over in the promised land," or "The old ship of Zion when she comes"—were the two books above all others upon which he bestowed his thought and from which he received his inspiration. He professed religion at a camp meeting and joined the Methodist Church. He said that he was the "stray sheep," the other members of the family being members of another denomination. Brother Sheffey, after his conversion, was a great shouter. "I believe in a religion that makes me happy, and when I am happy," he said, "I always feel like shouting." He was always a local preacher, never applied for admission to Conference, and never was a pastor,

but just traveled and preached when opportunity offered or Providence opened the way. He has always been a willing helper to other preachers in their evangelistic work. Most of his work was done in the "out-of-the-way places," where other preachers could not or would not go. He was the preacher of the poor, and hundreds and thousands were brought into a saving knowledge of the truth and led to higher and better living by his ministry. As a preacher he was the forerunner, the advance guard, for other and more permanent results. The goodness of the man, his childlike simplicity, singleness of purpose, always made him a power for good. His eccentricities were only noticed by the more cultured, but to the poor and unlearned he was the "prophet of God"; and his prayers, sermons, songs, and commands were heeded as of one having authority. He never had a salary, but he declared that God always provided for him. When he needed money he prayed for it, and God sent it. If he was in need of a suit of clothes, he would make it the subject of prayer, and he got the clothes. At a public collection for a benevolent purpose, if

he thought it worthy, he responded by saying: "Brother, I will give you five dollars, if some one will give it to me." It is needless to say he always got it. Being chided by some one that he was poor, while his lawyer brothers were rich by their superior wisdom, he said: "Some say old Bob Sheffey is a fool, and the judges are wise; but you wait until the judgment, and you will find who is wise and who is foolish."

He was married twice, and both unions were blessed with children. They were provided for, and some of them are prominent in the social and business world. Making no pretension to scholarship or pulpit ability, he accomplished far more in a life of eighty-two years than many whose intellectual acquirements and native ability gave greater promise. Holding revivals and protracted services was his life work. He was always on the wing, rarely spending more than a week with his family at a time, traveling his large circuit from Roanoke on the east to Bristol, Tenn., on the west, ,and from the Blue Ridge in North Carolina on the south to the coal fields in the Cumberland Mountains in

Kentucky and West Virginia on the north, coming and going at his own sweet will. Often the first signal of his appearance was his stopping at some house to give notice that he would preach that night at some schoolhouse in the neighborhood, saying: "Come out, tell your neighbors, or send them word; and, sister, bring a candle or a lamp with you." His name was a household word, and everybody knew or had heard of Bob Sheffey. Always riding a fat horse that must be well fed and groomed before he himself would eat, and with a physical frame that had always been capable of great endurance, and being a good eater and sleeper, he was able to do a work that few men could endure or stand up to.

The people not only knew Sheffey, but they knew his whims, and always took pains to humor him. His habits of prayer in the family and in private, his set times to shout, in the house or out of doors, when he was happy, were known by every one. His fondness for chicken and dumplings, and above all his passion for sweet things, especially honey, were always provided for if within reach of his hosts. His gruff, plain, truthful manner of re-

proving sin, public or private, his honesty of purpose and purity of motive, were never doubted, and when given were accepted as the truth and the sinner either reformed or tacitly acknowledged his guilt. He was a prophet that was "not without honor in his own country." His name was the synonym for eccentricity and goodness. Who among his neighbors did not know something funny and something good about Bob Sheffey? But among all the strange or laughable stories told, never did the breath of suspicion tarnish his fair name, nor were his motives challenged.

If every man is the architect of his own fortune, then may we say that Sheffey with his own hand has carved for himself a monument as enduring as the chiseled granite, the memory of whose life will linger long after the names of stars of seeming greater magnitude have been forgotten. His unbounded enthusiasm and zeal in life's one purpose and aim to him—to see souls made better and to glorify God—never faltered or waned. Not in the mountains of Virginia, nor on their rock ribs or granite base, but in the hearts and homes of the people, graven with memory's pen on im-

mortal tablets, is that unassuming, unpretending, humble name of Bob Sheffey, the man of God.

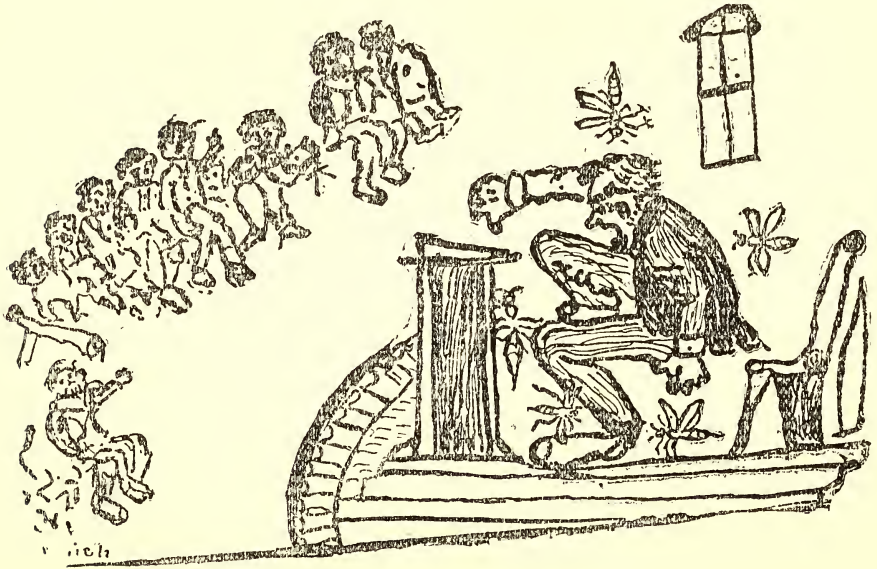
It is not to be presumed that Bob was devoid of humor, for he enjoyed a joke, laughed heartily at the seemingly ridiculous, but never was he undevout. His exuberance of life showed itself in his religion. He was a man of praise, and his heart was always bubbling over with joy. During a great revival, when scores were being converted, Sheffey was happy; and, leaping as high as he could jump and clapping his hands, he shouted: "Glory to God! Religion and the blue grass are going to take this country!" It was amusing to hear him as he mixed his figures and metaphors strangely together and descended from the sublime to the ridiculous. A preacher who had been laboring for several days in a protracted service, having no help, sent for Sheffey. Some of the members objected to his sending for him on account of his shouting and pulpit antics. Sheffey heard of the objection after he got to the neighborhood, and while conducting the first service he stopped in the midst of his sermon, and said: "I under-

stand some of you don't like Bob Sheffey because he shouts." Then he jumped straight up three times, and each time he shouted: "Glory to God! Now how do you like that?" Then he leaped over the pulpit into the altar, clapped his hands, and shouted: "Halleluiah! How do you like that?" Then he walked back into the pulpit and resumed his discourse as if nothing had happened. He said that in heaven, the Bible tells, the angels with covered faces shouted all the time, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory," and that God wanted his will done on earth as it was in heaven, and that all men ought to praise the Lord, and he was going to do it.

Bob Sheffey's shouting was sincere. He was not like the country preacher, who hung his Sunday trousers in an open back room and two weeks later put them on to go to his appointment without discovering that the wasps had built a very large-sized nest in them. When he got to church and began to warm up in his discourse, it seemed to stir up the little red-dressed and slim-waisted creatures, and they started down his legs to recon-

noiter and find out what the trouble was all about. And when the pressure of the folds of his trousers became too oppressive, they began to sting and he began to slap his legs. This but added fuel to the fire. The more he slapped, the more they would sting. He saw that he was losing the thread of his discourse, and thought that the best thing he could do would be to shout and clap out of his troubles. So he began to jump, shout, and clap his hands, first on one leg and then on the other, and one slap from him would bring two stings from the wasps. The thing was becoming terrible, and his terrified congregation, supposing their now flushed but slapping and shouting preacher had lost his mind, started to his rescue, when he said: "Halleluiah, brethren [slap], the word of the Lord is in my mouth [slap, slap, slap], but—ouch [slap]—the devil is in my breeches!"

Bob Sheffey, like many others, got credit for many things that he never said or did. Many little things have been magnified, and much that has been palmed off on Sheffey is but the exaggerated and distorted brain rubbish of others. Some preachers, if they want



"The word of the Lord is in my mouth, but the devil is in my breeches!"

to say a mean, sharp thing to their people, will pretend to quote Sam Jones on them, when Sam is as innocent as an angel. Just after the war and during the Reconstruction period, when everything — religious, social, and political—was in a state of chaos, Rev. W. W. Neal was sent to the Riceville Circuit. He was a modest, cultured, Christian gentleman; chaste in the use of his language, fine in conversational powers, and a good preacher. An Irishman, who was very fond of and a great admirer of Neal, without malice or purpose, made it appear that the parson had made use of a very ugly "cuss" word, when in fact he was as innocent as a newborn babe. The Irishman met the new preacher at Dr. Clemenson's, had been introduced, and had gone out on Sunday to hear him preach. On Monday he met another Irishman and said to him: "Pat, did you hear the new pracher yesterday?" "No," said Pat, "didn't know there was any." "Yes," said Mike, "it was the new Southern Methodist pracher, and he prached a good sermon, so he did; and, Pat, the pracher was in the Rebel army, and so he was, and his name was Nale. He said his grandparents

were from Oireland, and I told him that no doubt he was akin to the O'Nale's of Oireland, and that it was a pity that he ever dropped the 'O,' for it would have been an honor to him as long as he lived. And, Pat, the pracher stayed with the Doctor, and when he started away the Doctor gave him foive dollars; and don't you think the pracher said that it was the first 'damned' cent he'd received since he had been on the circuit?" The Irishman never dreamed that he was slandering his friend the preacher, but the preacher—from those who knew of the joke—never heard the last of it. And, by the way, is it not a fact that truth itself may sometimes become slander? The truth may be told in such a way and at such a time, though a fact of itself harmless, that the man on whom it is told is slandered, and the one who tells it is a slanderer. It is true that many things have been told on Bob Sheffey—and others, as for that, at their expense—that are utterly untrue and wholly fabrications. Bob Sheffey's work and character were unique and interesting, and many amusing and even ludicrous incidents occurred in his long and strangely

eventful career, which I hope to be able to sketch in these articles later on. But one more word about the country and the environments which helped to produce and contributed to make such a life and character possible.

Moral Atmosphere.

There is no section of country where the moral and religious sentiments of Christianity more universally predominate than in the southwestern counties of old Virginia. To be a Christian, a member of some Church, is the rule; to be a sinner, an outsider, the exception. Education, intellectuality, morality, and religion form the basis of home and social life, and skepticism, immorality, and infidelity have never found a lodgment with that people. Their ideal of a religious life is of the highest type. To be sure, all are not pious; all are not, strictly speaking, religious; many are not even members of the Church; but the sentiment and moral drift are all in that direction, and when you go among them you feel that you are in the very hotbed of Bible and religious influence. This sentiment is not confined to one class; but all, poor and rich,

educated and illiterate, have the same tendency toward religion. You will find men who are profane, some who drink even to drunkenness; you will find the criminal and outlaw class there, as elsewhere; but even among them there is that respect for religion, the Church, and the preaching of the gospel that you rarely witness in other places.

In one of the county towns of this section some years ago, at a large gathering of preachers and lay delegates attending a Conference or Association, the eleven o'clock service on Sunday was attended by an immense concourse of people, and the preacher, from a distance, a popular orator, preached a very interesting sermon on the death of Moses. In his congregation was a prominent citizen who was accompanied by his family, but he was himself very much under the influence of liquor. The sermon was listened to with rapt attention by the vast audience, but by none with greater interest than by our prominent citizen in his cups. The orator had described the birth of Moses, the basket of bulrushes, his adoption into the family of Pharaoh, his education, his call to deliver Is-

rael, his leadership of forty years in the wilderness, the giving of the law, the end of his journey, and, finally, his death. "God tells Moses to go up into Nebo and die!" The preacher's eloquence and pathos had wrought his congregation up to the highest pitch of excitement. "Moses did not want to go up into the mountain alone. He asked God to let some of the old elders go with him. 'No.' Then he asked if Joshua could not go. The Lord said, 'No.'" The preacher cried out, "Who will go with him?" There was a pause; many were weeping. Just then the prominent citizen struggled to his feet, and with tears rolling down his cheeks he leaned toward the preacher and stutteringly said: "I will go with him, Doctor, if you can't get any one else." This sally from the drunken but tender-hearted citizen paralyzed the preacher and spoiled the good effects of his sermon. But it was among this people that Bob Sheffey was born, and among them he lived from young manhood to fourscore and two; and to them he ministered in his own peculiar way, and from them much has been gathered that forms an interesting link in their history and his life.

CHAPTER IV.

Greatness—Big and Little.

If the old woman's description of a great man were to be applied as a rule with which to measure all men, very few indeed would come up to the proper standard of greatness. She said, when appealed to for her idea of what constituted a great man, raising her specks, smoothing down her apron, and putting on a matronly look of long experience and stored-up wisdom: "My idea, girls, of a great man is a man who is keerful of his clothes, don't drink spirits, kin read his Bible without spelling the words, and kin eat a cold dinner on wash days to save the wimmen the trouble of cooking." The word "great" is a descriptive adjective that may be applied to all sorts of men. A man may be a great drunkard, a great liar, a great rascal, a great fool, or just simply a great man. Bob Sheffey presented many phases of character that fall within the limits of greatness.

He was always a great oddity. Traveling at great intervals over a section of country as

large as or larger than many of the smaller European empires, not stopping long at any particular place, yet in every community where he had been something Sheffey said or did that was out of the usual routine or order of things lingers in the minds of the people. Many stories are told of his humanity and tenderness of feeling, not for man alone but for beast, bird, and insect. He would not kill a bug if he knew it. If you should ask his reason, he would tell you that God made it, and that it had as much right to enjoy sweet life as he had. Aunt Betsy Chaffin, one of God's noble women, once said to him: "Brother Sheffey, they tell me that you will not hurt or kill anything. Suppose you should get fleas on you, would you try to kill them?" "Well, sister, I would hate to hurt them, but of course I would try to brush them off when the pesky little things tried to eat me. Now when I was up at Mr. Brown's the other night I had to sleep upstairs, and the room and bed were full of fleas, and they gave me a 'heap' of trouble; so I just opened the window blind, put my feet out of the window, and let them jump off. But I felt very sorry for them the

next morning, for I suspect some of them got crippled, or maybe killed, as they had to jump a greater distance than I expected."

He was holding a meeting in Carroll county, and on Sunday after morning service went home with Mr. Ball for his dinner. After dinner was over he walked out in the woods, as was his custom, for private prayers and to get happy. He stayed longer than the family expected, and when they had waited two or three hours for his return they became uneasy and started out to find him, fearing that he had gotten lost or some accident had befallen him. After searching for some time, they spied an object half a mile away, which they supposed to be Sheffey. But what could he be doing? He was in a stooping posture, and seemed to be playing in the dirt or mud. They cautiously approached, and when within a short distance paused without being observed. It was Sheffey. They could see him spread what seemed to be a red bandanna handkerchief on the ground, then dip his hands down into the ground and pour the contents on his handkerchief; then he would gather the four corners together and carry it to a running

stream a short distance away. Then he would return and repeat the same thing. At last they went up to him, and said: "Why, Brother Sheffey, what are you doing? We thought you might be lost, and have come after you. What are you doing?" "Well, brother, this mud hole was full of poor little tadpoles, and the water was about to dry up. I was afraid they would die here without water, so I have been catching them and carrying them down yonder to that stream. That's what I have been doing." And that was Bob Sheffey.

After his last marriage his home was at Staffordsville, a small village in Giles county, Va. His home was a small cottage on the lower side of the street, with a small porch on the front leading into a hall. This hall led to a porch or platform at the back side of the building, which was several feet off of the ground. This porch had a banister or railing all around, except where the steps went down into the back yard. It had always been Sheffey's habit to stay on his knees in prayer until he got happy. When at home his private chamber was one of the front rooms, and when he got happy he would break out into the

hall and run, shouting as he went, to the back porch, put his hands on the railing, and jump down into the yard. Some years ago they had a fine pet pig, very fat and pretty, and the whole family, especially Brother Sheffey, thought a great deal of this much-domesticated porker. The pet pig spent most of its time in the back yard. One day Sheffey got happy. Out into the hall he went, shouting, "Glory to God!" He sprang over the railing, down on the pet pig, and killed it. Sheffey's feelings were hurt, and the family mourned the loss of their much-loved pet. He did not get happy for several days, and he talked and looked like a murderer. He was about to lose all the joy of his religion. One day he stayed on his knees much longer than common. Finally he raised a yell. Here he came running out into the hall and leaped over the porch railing, shouting as he went, "Get out of the way, pig; Sheffey's happy again!"

Richard was himself again. He was assisting a young preacher in a meeting, and they had gone to spend the day with a kind but poor family. The house had but two rooms: one was the kitchen and dining room, and the

other was the sitting room, parlor, and family bedroom. The good wife had her home in order, the beds were clean and covered with white spreads, and the whole room was neat and tidy. The husband had to be absent until the dinner hour, and the wife had to play the host as well as do all of the cooking. She left her kitchen door ajar so that she could not only entertain and look after her guests, but at the same time keep the pots boiling in the kitchen. The young preacher was resting on the sofa; Sheffey was sitting in the middle of the room with the large family Bible open on his lap, seemingly very much interested in reading the Scripture. Presently the young preacher noticed that Sheffey's eyes were not resting on the Bible, but that he was gazing intently at the white spread. Then without a word Sheffey cautiously laid the Bible upon the floor, got up, and noiselessly tiptoed to the bed. After two or three dips with both hands he turned, holding both of his hands together and his body stooped. He eagerly tiptoed to the door and out into the yard, then threw both hands up as high as he could, as if trying to throw something up into the air. The

young preacher was very much embarrassed. Thinking that the lady of the house had seen him, and supposing that Sheffey had found a bedbug or chinch on the woman's nice-looking bed, he knew she would feel very much mortified. So he got up and quietly followed Sheffey, and asks in a low whisper, "What are you doing, Brother Sheffey?" "Why, brother," said Sheffey, "I saw a fly on that bed, and it looked so feeble that I thought I would bring it out here and help it to fly."

That evening they took supper with Aunt Betsy Chaffin. She owned a magnificent estate, had a splendid brick mansion, and was a woman of education, culture, and piety. Her house was the home of the preachers. While waiting for supper the young preacher and Sheffey sat out in the front portico which was covered with vines, making it a cool, delightful retreat in the warm summer evenings. Sheffey had not been sitting there long, until he discovered an old hen sitting on a nest of eggs on the ground among the thick, clustering vines. It at once attracted his notice, and he called the young preacher's attention to it. Then in a whisper, he asked: "Brother, do you

suppose that Sister Chaffin knows that hen is sitting there?" The young preacher tried to assure him that she did, but that did not satisfy the now much-interested Bob Sheffey. The young preacher began to talk of other matters, hoping to change the subject; but as soon as he paused, Sheffey slipped over to him and whispered: "Brother, don't you reckon that old hen is hungry?" "O, no, Brother Sheffey; don't you know that Mrs. Chaffin has plenty to feed with, and of course she looks after her?" About this time the supper bell rang. They both walked down into the large basement dining room and were seated at the table. Brother Sheffey asked a blessing. Then, lifting his eyes and turning in his chair to gaze at the large, fine-looking old lady at the head of the table while she was preparing the coffee, he said: "Sister, did you know that you had a hen sitting out yonder by your portico?" "O, yes, Brother Sheffey, I knew it." "Well, sister, have you fed her anything? She looks like she is hungry." "She gets plenty, I suppose," she said, with a smile, as she turned to ask him if he would take sugar and cream in his coffee. The question was dropped, and

the young preacher and Mrs. Chaffin talked of the meeting. Brother Sheffey was now and then asked a question, which was always answered with a yes or a no. When supper was over, and just as they were fixing to leave the table, Sheffey turned and said: "Sister, I wish you'd give me a little dough or a few crumbs of bread. I want to give it to that hen. I am afraid she'll starve." He was allowed to take the food to the faithful old sitting hen. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It is said that "a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind."

Bob Sheffey was a great eater. It is said that the nearest way to some people's hearts is through their stomachs; and if you wished to make Sheffey love you or get happy, the best way was to give him something good to eat. He loved chicken. He was fond of honey, and has been known to shout over a well-filled dish of honey fresh from the hive. With him it was always "sweet Lord, sweet religion, and sweet something to eat." It was always a custom with him, when he had finished his meal, to add a little more sugar to what was left at the bottom of his coffee cup, put into

that some preserves, or molasses, or honey, or anything else sweet, fill his mouth with it, and leave the table for the grove or place where he expected to pray, keeping the sweet things in his mouth until he got happy enough to shout and then swallow them. Being asked why he did that, he answered: "Well, brother, I can always get happy quicker if I have something sweet in my mouth."

Nature and Providence generally pay all of their debts. Things in this world, after all that is said to the contrary, are pretty well evened up. The rich man has no appetite; the poor man can eat with a relish everything that is set before him. Bob Sheffey had never received much money for his work, had never been able to riot in a luxurious salary or lord it over the income from rich estates; but he had gotten the cream of earthly existence: plenty to eat, with a good appetite to enjoy it, and a religious enjoyment that gives assurance of a royal feast forever. We can say of him what the good old Christian woman said to her pastor when his year's work was done and he was starting for Conference. He was quite young, very popular with his people, and

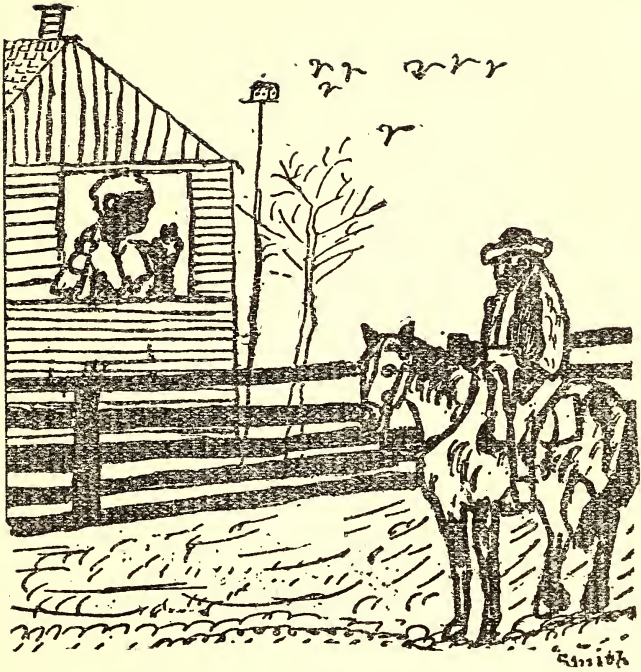
especially with the old folks. He had done a good year's work, everybody liked him, and they wanted him to come back another year. But there was one drawback in the young man's way. The stewards had not collected all of his salary, and to the preacher this was a very serious impediment to his return. He had spent the last night at the home of a good old brother and sister. They had given him the best they had to eat, breakfast was now over, and he was preparing to bid them farewell. The old sister began to cry. Between her sobs, she said: "Brother, I do hope you will come back to us again next year." "Well, sister, I love you all, but they have not paid me." "Well, brother, come back, and it may be we can do better next year for you." "I'm afraid they won't. They've paid me very little money this year," said he. "Well, brother, I know it's true we've paid you mighty little money, but you must remember that you've eat a sight!"

And this is true of Bob Sheffey. While he may not be called a gormandizer, one thing he always did and always enjoyed three times a day and sometimes oftener—a

good square meal, and the more sweet things the better. Well, that is pretty near all that any man gets out of life—just what he eats, wears, and spares.

Sheffey was out on a long itinerant trip, He had gotten a late start in the morning. It was rather a new section of country to him, and was poor and thinly settled. The noon hour was rapidly approaching and there was an aching void within his stomach, a gnawing hunger. There is nothing that so provokes and aggravates an appetite as that far-away feeling, that uncertainty and dread that steals over a hungry man in a strange country, when the problem as to where, how, and when he can satisfy his hunger is as yet an unsolved quantity. The hungry boy at mill who has to wait until long after the dinner hour for his grist has a vague idea of that strange, uncomfortable feeling. Houses along the way were few and far between, and Sheffey began to feel desperate. At last he spied a house in the dim distance, but the question came to his mind: "Will they give me my dinner? Will they have anything that is fit to eat? Maybe they are not at home or no one lives in the house."

He concluded to make the matter a subject of prayer. Getting down off of his horse, he knelt by the roadside. After a long struggle in prayer, asking the Lord to guide and direct him to some place where he could satisfy the cravings of his tired and hungry nature, he remounted his horse and rode on with smiling expectation to the house. He called at the gate, and a dusky old colored aunty poked her head out of the window and, recognizing him, said: "Howdy, Brother Sheffey." "Howdy-do, aunty. The Lord told me to come here and get my dinner, aunty, and that you were going to have chicken for dinner. Are you?" "Yes, 'deed I am, Brother Sheffey. Had a old hen on all the mornin' a cookin'. You git right down, chile, and cum right in, and I'll have yo' dinner ready for you d'reckly." Sheffey was pleased. He got down, hitched, washed his hands, and sat down in the cabin to wait until the meal was ready. The old woman draped the table with a nice white linen cloth; and with bread, coffee, pickles, preserves, and the big fat hen, a large plate of gravy and dumplings, it was indeed an inviting feast for a hungry man. She at last invited him to the table.



"Yes, honey, I'se gwine to hab chickin; cum right in, and I'll hab yo' dinner ready for you d'rectly."

He asked a blessing. Then she picked up the chicken dish, carried it to a near-by table, and began to carve. Sheffey's eyes followed her in her efforts to dissect the fowl. When this was done, she came and picked up his plate, and said: "Now, Brother Sheffey, what part of the chicken will you have?" "It don't make any difference, sister," replied Sheffey. "I expect to eat it all any way!"

CHAPTER V.

Methods and Results.

"It is better to be good than great," says the proverb, "for you'll have less opposition." And it is said that if the best man's faults were written on his forehead it would make him pull his hat down over his eyes. It is easier to tear down than to build up, to demolish than to construct. We are a race of grumblers and critics. The old fable of Jupiter, Neptune, and Minerva contending which could make the most perfect thing is an illustration. Jupiter made a man; Neptune, a bull; and Minerva made a house. Old Momus (for he had not yet been turned out of heaven) was chosen judge to decide which production had the greatest merit. He began by finding fault with the bull, because his horns were not below his eyes so that he might see when he butted with them. Next he found fault with the man, because there was no window in his breast so that all might see his inward thoughts and feelings. Lastly, he found fault with Minerva's house, because it had no

wheels to enable its occupants to remove from bad neighborhoods. His criticism made them all mad. Jupiter forthwith drove him out of heaven, telling him that a fault-finder could never be pleased, and that it was time to criticise the work of others when he had done some good himself. He has a numerous family on earth, and I reckon that every critic and grumbler can trace his lineage back to Momus.

As a preacher, Bob Sheffey made no pretension to oratory, eloquence, or biblical exposition. His sermons were not models of homiletics. In his exhortations he preached many things to the people. He would take a text and preach about what he pleased, mostly from his text. His text might suggest the subject of prayer, but just as likely as not he would talk about the judgment or the devil. Of course some fastidious people objected to this, but he did not care for people's objections. There is no accounting for people's taste when it comes to preachers. Very few people are judges of preachers or preaching. A certain congregation in Tennessee some years ago was without a pastor, so they sent a delegate to the approaching Conference to

pick out the kind of man they wanted, and get the bishop to appoint him to their church. The delegate went to the Conference, and there were two hundred preachers there. He walked around among them like a horse or cattle buyer, eying this, that, and the other one, but was at some trouble in his own mind about making a selection. He had been to the bishop several times, but was unable to make a choice. Finally the bishop told him that he was expecting a transfer from the West, and that he might suit. When the transfer came, the delegate looked him over from head to foot, was very much pleased, and told the bishop to appoint him. The only apprehension that he expressed to the bishop was that he might be a little too learned or scholarly for his people. He hastened back to his people to tell them that he had secured the very man that they wanted, but "I fear, brethren, from the preacher's looks he will be a little too metaphysical for the most of our people." The preacher came. A full house greeted him, but the people were disappointed in their expectations. The delegate was awfully blue. In a few days the bishop passed

through the place. He met the delegate and asked him how he and his people were pleased with the new preacher. The delegate shook his head, looked serious, but said nothing. "Why, brother," said the good bishop, "is he too scholarly for you?" "No," said the delegate. "Is he too deep or metaphysical?" "No, bishop; we are ruined." "Can't he preach, brother?" "No, bishop; he can't preach, sing, nor pray. And the worst of it is, the louder he halloos the less noise he makes."

It is not true that Bob Sheffey could not halloo loud or make plenty of noise. His preaching was simple, his illustrations homely, and sometimes ridiculous and amusing. His was a plain gospel for a plain people. He preached repentance to the sinner, told the drunkard to quit drinking, the liar, profane swearer, and thief to reform. "The wicked must forsake his way." He pointed the weary, burdened, and broken-hearted sinners to the cross, to Christ as the only hope of salvation. He urged upon Christian believers holiness of heart and purity of life. His exhortations were earnest and sometimes beautifully eloquent. Often his appeals were in dem-

onstration and power. He impressed his thoughts upon the audience with quaint figures, such as had occurred in his own experience or were gathered by observation. He made no previous or special preparation of his sermons. Every day and occasion provided for itself. The birds, the insects, the trees, the flowers, the rocks, and streams gave Sheffey his illustrations. He

> Found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

He liked to go into the pulpit happy. Sometimes his services were delayed because he lingered in the near-by grove praying for the happy feeling. Many found fault with his sermons, style, language, shouting, and peculiarities. But the common people heard him gladly, and to such he directed his ministry. Many intelligent, good people helped him in his work and encouraged him. They overlooked his shortcomings in literary and theological preparation, knowing that he could do a work and reach a certain class of people that other men could not. Besides, Sheffey's prayers, exhortations, and songs were always "good to the use of edifying."

An old woman who had made it a rule of her life never to criticise a sermon or a preacher, but if she said anything about them to say something good, went to hear a preacher. He was a very poor preacher and his sermon was very poor. When she came home her daughters, who had often been reproved by her for their criticism, said to her: "Mother, how did you like the sermon today?" She studied a moment, and then answered: "Well, children, he had a splendid text." Sheffey's texts were always good, for they were from the Bible. But Sheffey's power was in exhortation. He was a great exhorter in his young days, and sometimes his appeals were melting and overpowering. Thousands have been converted in his meetings and have gone to heaven. He was always deeply in earnest, and his methods were entirely his own. He went at his work like a house on fire. He was very pointed in his reproofs, and some of his figures were grotesque and amusing, generally more apt to provoke a smile than to invite a tear. He was not void of pathos or persuasion, but he relied more upon fear and the dread of punishment. He dwelt

upon the terrors of the law, the sufferings of hell, and the awfulness of the judgment. His pulpit and altar gesticulations, his method of walking up and down the aisle, from one side of the church to the other, were apt to make some uneasy, especially when he directly confronted them and pointed into their faces with his finger—like Nathan the prophet to David the king—as much as to say, "Thou art the man"; or shaking hands with his whole congregation, walking from seat to seat, shouting awhile over this good old brother, or exhorting away down the aisle an old sinner to "flee from the wrath to come." You could call his preaching a religious service, a sermon if you wished, an exhortation. His methods were peculiar, but always resulted in good to many. Peter's exhortation on the day of Pentecost was one of the most effectual sermons ever preached. Three thousand souls were converted under it, and yet it was just an exhortation, and was as far from a modern sermon as day is from night.

In one of the mountain countries where Sheffey had occasionally gone, there was an old fellow named Oliver Harris who had been

in some of Sheffey's meetings and was a great admirer of his style and methods. He was an exhorter, or rather a leader, and would occasionally conduct a prayer meeting and exhort. But he was devoid of gifts, and had very few graces. His chief talents were a loud shackling voice, immense gesticulation, and inordinate ambition. Uncle Oll lived at Piney Grove, in a poor and thinly settled section of the country. The people were all poor. They worshiped in a little pine log schoolhouse. The circuit rider could preach for them only once a month, and that was generally on week days. He appointed Uncle Oll the leader, and told him that he must hold prayer meeting every Sunday. Uncle Oll was willing, but the people objected, because on Sunday they could go to other places to hear preaching, but argued that all would attend on Sunday night, if the prayer meeting could be held then. The preacher agreed, so did Uncle Oll, and an appointment was made for the next Sunday night. Most of the people living around Piney Grove were related to Uncle Oliver Harris (his sons, sons-in-law, grandsons, nephews, and nieces), and there were few

families besides his relations. The steward of that church, old Sister Kickly, and Mr. Acid and family were about the only ones that were not related to him.

Sunday night came. The people turned out, but not a candle or a lamp was to be found. In fact, there was no place to put a candle or to set or hang a lamp; besides, the people did not have either lamp or candle to bring, as they rarely used such things. The schoolhouse was about sixteen feet square. The benches were made of logs split into slabs, and were arranged around the walls. There was a stick chimney on the side, a large, open fireplace that took up nearly one whole end of the building, one door, and a little hole about a foot square for the window. It was in the summer, so they did not make any fire. Uncle Oll, as they called him, was on hand. He had brought with him two long, rich pine torches to light up the meetinghouse. The meeting was opened with a song and prayer. They had no Bible lesson, for Uncle Oll could not read. Uncle Oll took his stand in the middle of the one door to deliver his exhortation. He held the lighted torches in each hand, lighting up

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the whole building, so he could see the faces of all his auditors distinctly. He was very excitable—or rather, I should say, emotional—and as he warmed up in his exhortation he gesticulated vehemently, swinging first one hand to the right and the other to the left, his voice gradually rising higher and higher. To give emphasis he would sometimes stamp his feet; and the loosely laid floor on the long, slender pine pole sleeper would swing and sway beneath his heavy tread, making a strange, sad, sighing sound that added melancholy to the plaintive voice of the exhorter. As he warmed up he paced back and forth, and in his earnest, emphatic way would point to one and then to another. Forgetting the length of his blazing torches, he would shove them right into his hearers' faces as he gesticulated, and they would have to make a sudden dodge or stoop as the flame passed from side to side above their heads. It was getting both interesting and exciting. He would walk rapidly toward his audience, then back slowly to the door, then to those on the right, then to those on the left. His rapid and violent gesticulations caused the rich pine torches

to burn fiercer, and the now red-hot coals from the charred ends of his torches began to fly in every direction, and the people began to stand up and jump out of the way. It looked like a game of hide and seek. In his excitement Uncle Oil did not notice the flying sparks from his dashing torches, and his audience had forgotten his exhortation in their efforts to escape the flying coals. He stood in the door or near it, and it would have been dangerous to have tried to escape that way on account of the blazing torches. Their only chance was to dodge from one side of the house to the other. To a stranger the scene would have looked more like an old-time negro "hoe-down" dance, with Uncle Oil as the fiddler and calling out the movements, and his audience the merry dancers. Under the circumstances Uncle Oil was the master of the situation. There was no way to escape, as he held the door like the pass of Thermopylæ, and his audience must stay with him and dodge to the end, or take the consequences.

The final end of that meeting and as to how it closed out has never been told but by one side to the affair. Uncle Oliver never had an-

other chance: that was his last prayer meeting. No one was ever brave enough to ask him or any of his folks how the meeting closed that night or about the row. When the preacher came to his appointment, a delegation consisting of the steward, Mrs. Kickly, Mr. Acid and family met him, and demanded a recall of Uncle Oliver's appointment. "For to tell you, brother, he liked to have burned us up with his old torches, and we came near running ourselves to death to dodge the fire and keep the torches out of our faces. We could not get out at the door, and we had to run around in that old house for about four hours before the old torches burned out. We don't want any more of it, for he will burn up both us and the church."

Sheffey never used a torch of the fat-pine description, nor flung sparks of that kind into his people's faces at his meetings, but he did use the torch of truth and the fire of love, which flashed conviction to guilty consciences and made the wicked sinner very restless and uneasy. Of course now and then some one would revolt at his methods, and would leave the meeting or not go about it. But it was

more frequently the case that characters were attracted to his services that he did not want, or at least their presence was a greater damage to the meeting than their absence would have been.

In a meeting conducted by a young preacher in that section of the country, when the preacher went to the church he found that the congregation had not yet gathered. He sat down near the pulpit on a bench with some brethren. Just then his eye caught a glimpse of a man some halfway back in the church sitting near the wall, and leaning with his hands and body over on the back of a bench in front of him. He saw that there was something wrong with the fellow, and said to the man sitting by him: "What's the matter with that fellow yonder?" "O, nothing much; he's been drinking a little, but he's a very quiet sort of a fellow." "Now, brethren, you'd better get that drunken man out of here, or he'll disturb the meeting, if you don't watch him closely." "He's all right, brother; don't say anything to him; it will make him mad, and then his people won't like it. We'll watch him." But the preacher was uneasy, and went

to several of the brethren about the drunken fellow, but they would not remove him. The preacher commenced the service, and he was nearly through his sermon when he heard a racket and paused. The fellow had gotten deathly sick and was vomiting, and such heaving and groaning as he did! Three or four men rushed to the fellow, picked him up and started out of doors with him. "There," said the preacher, "I told you brethren that you ought to take that fellow out; that he would disturb the meeting." Just then the fellow gave another heave, and muttered: "No wonder I vomited [hic]. Such preachin' as you're doing is enough to make a dog [hic] sick enough to puke."

CHAPTER VI.

Sheffey and Cleanliness.

Cleanliness is said to be next to godliness. It is said that the Pharisees, an old Jewish sect, would wash after they had touched anything. If washing often would make a person a Pharisee, then Bob Sheffey was a Pharisee, for he was a great washer. He used a great deal of water. He would wash his hands, if he had the water and the chance, every time he shook hands with any one. He was always very particular about microbes and germs. When he was washing preparatory to eating, he would not shake hands with any one if he could help it; and if he did so, it was with great reluctance. A lady friend, who had not seen him for many years, when at a basket meeting in the summer of 1900 saw the old man, and determined to speak to him. He had just washed when she came up, and had the towel in his hands preparatory to wiping them. When she spoke, and he saw that he would have to shake hands with her if

something was not done, he gave great offense to her by calling another brother up, and saying: "Will you please shake hands with this sister for me? I'm wiping my hands." But cleanliness was a passion with him. He liked to sleep in a clean bed; wanted clean, rich food to eat, and plenty of clean water to wash with. No doubt soap and water are great civilizers and health-producers, as well as life-prolongers. A clean body makes a healthy mind. Next to a pure heart is a clean body. Plenty of soap and water would save many a bad spell of the blues, as well as a large quantity of blue mass. A bath tub and a five-cent cake of soap have not only saved plenty of people from despondency, but no doubt some from filling the grave of a suicide. The woman who applied for a divorce from her husband on the ground that he refused to wash, or to allow any one else to wash his feet, was perfectly justifiable.

It was in the Clear Fork valley. Sheffey had been there for a week in the midst of a great revival. He had been in many homes, ate and slept—some he had not been into; and in fact he was always very particular

about where he went to eat and sleep. He liked nice things to eat as well as a good bed; then he wanted the place to have an inviting aspect. One day he went home with a new family. He was not altogether pleased with the looks of the husband or wife, but he went because they insisted. It was a little over a mile. They were all on horseback. When they got to the house, the husband took charge of the horses; the wife went in, unlocked the doors, invited Brother Sheffey in, then went to the kitchen, stuck a match to the wood in the stove, and hurriedly went for a pail of water. When she got back, Sheffey had his coat off and sleeves rolled up, and was standing on the porch by the washbowl, waiting for the water so that he could wash. She poured out a good bowlful, handed him the soap, and went to get a clean towel; but when she returned he had not washed nor begun to wash, as she expected, and she said: "Brother Sheffey, there's water, soap, and a clean towel; why don't you wash?" Stepping politely back and handing her the soap, he replied: "No, sister; you wash first. You've got to do the cooking, so wash your hands clean,

sister." That was nothing more than she or any of those people expected; and they never take any offense. There are plenty of men, and maybe some women, like the old dirty tramp who wrote this testimonial for a soap factory: "I used some of your soap twenty years ago, and have not used any other since."

Lots of people who think they have lost their religion and all their friends, if they would take a good all-over bath and put on a clean suit from the skin out, could both sing and whistle as sweet and merry as a lark. Bob Sheffey, when it came to his stomach, always had an eye to business. He loved rich food, and always went where the pot boiled the strongest. Passing one day near the kitchen door, at a house where he was stopping, he saw the lady of the house kneading dough, when he said: "Put plenty of lard in, sister, if you want the biscuit to be good." He loved coffee with rich cream and plenty of sweetening in it. Chicken, fried, stewed, or boiled, was a choice dish with him; and the more highly seasoned, the greater his esteem. The gravy, if rich, was never ignored. At a dining in Wytheville, a young clergyman, who had

been reared in Grayson county, but had charge of a church in Floyd county, Va., sat opposite a lady who had been reared in Floyd —a fact of which he was not aware—but was then a resident of Wythe county. The host asked the clergyman how he liked Floyd. "O, I don't like it much," said he; "they haven't got anything to eat over there but buckwheat and gravy." This "rattled" the lady who had been reared in Floyd, and she resented it as a slam on her native county. "Yes, Mr. Billups," she retorted, "I was reared in Floyd myself, and I've been over in Grayson, where you were reared, sir; and you may have a little more buckwheat in Grayson than we have in Floyd, but you haven't got the gravy, sir." Sheffey's stomach was just as sensitive and resentful of slights as that of the lady from Floyd. He not only liked the buckwheat, but he wanted the gravy. It would be unjust—yea, cruel—to say that he worshiped his stomach; but he did certainly have a very tender and affectionate regard for it. Tree sugar and tree molasses are not uncommon articles of diet with the farmers in the western counties of Virginia; and buckwheat batter

cakes, swimming in butter and rolled in pure tree molasses, make a very palatable dish for any healthy and well-regulated stomach, and may not be worse than what some kings and queens have to eat.

Everybody knows that it is very hard to be religious when you are hungry. Faith on an empty stomach does not give much consolation. It is like the old darky and his "possum." Uncle Harry had killed a possum, cleaned, dressed it, and hung it up before his fire to bake. Then he lay down on his pallet before the fire to warm his feet. Soon he dropped to sleep, and in his dreams had forgotten all about the toothsome possum. About midnight his son Tom, a great big strapping boy, who had been out prowling around as was his custom, came in, found his father sound asleep, and the possum thoroughly cooked and browned to a finish. The fragrance of the savory dish was a temptation to Tom's hungry stomach that he could not resist. He quietly took the possum from the swinging pothooks, and sat down; and before his appetite was appeased he had eaten the whole carcass, save the bones and a few frag-

ments of skin. But Tom was now in trouble, for he knew if his father waked up hungry, as he was sure to be, and found that possum gone, there would be war in the cabin, and he would be the one that would have to suffer. So he took a piece of fat skin and quietly greased his father's lips; both his hands and fingers were smeared, then he piled all the bones carefully near his father's mouth, and quietly sneaked away from the cabin. After a while Uncle Harry awoke, and rubbing his eyes he began looking for the possum; but lo! it was gone. Had it burned up? No. Had some one stolen it? No; the door was closed, and no one was in the cabin. Then he tasted his lips: "Why, dat taste like possum." Then he felt his hands; they were greasy. He smelled his fingers: "Why, dat smells like possum." Then his eyes dropped, and there were the bones all piled close to where his mouth had been. "I wonder if I did eat dat possum while I'se asleep? kase dat taste [smacking his lips] like possum, dese fingers smell like possum, and dare's de bones. Well, I declar, if I did eat dat ar possum, it lays lighter on my stomach and gives less consolation than any possum dat ever I did eat!"

"Oh! it's a buckeye."

Sugar orchards form about the only groves to be found on many of the plantations now, and they are lovely spots in the summer, their thick shady foliage moving above the soft, velvety blue grass, making it an inviting retreat for meditation and prayer. Sheffey liked to find a sugar orchard where he could hide away, and pray until he got happy. He had spent the night with a brother; breakfast was over, and filling his mouth with sweet things he started to the grove, a sugar orchard. He had prayed until he was made happy, and he was seen shouting up in the orchard. He was running from one tree to another, putting both hands on the tree, and saying, "Lord, bless this sugar tree"; then another, "Lord, bless this sugar tree"; then another, "Lord, bless this sugar tree." But just then he looked up and saw that he had his hand on the wrong tree, and he said, "O no, not that, Lord; it's a buckeye!"

CHAPTER VII.

WINGLESS ANGELS—ODDITIES.

A DONKEY with peacock feathers in his tail would look no better than in his own homely skin. David made a very poor fighter in Saul's armor. Every man, to do and be what his Maker intended, must be himself. Bob Sheffey never tried to ape any one. He had no model, but blazed out his own way; and everything he said or did was the outcome of what was in the man. He always tried to be good, was always on the side of right. The Bible was his guide, the Ten Commandments the law of his actions, and he observed the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." He never administered a reproof except in love. He was never out of humor. There was much to provoke anger, but he went first to the Lord in prayer. It was this that made him very often appear unique or unlike any one else. He always took plenty of time to pray; and the man who keeps company with God has high companionship, nor will such a man stoop to little or

mean things. There was no guile or deceit manifest in anything Sheffey ever did. He was as artless and simple as a child. When he prayed in a family, every member of that house was called by name, from the babe in the cradle to the aged grandparents. He did not forget the servants. In one home, where he had prayed for the husband, wife, each of the children, the old cook, the grandparents, all the kinsfolk, and just as he was ready to say "Amen," he thought of a little negro boy in the family who had done him a service, and he said: "O Lord, there is that little negro boy—I was about to forget; he brought me a drink of water. Lord, bless him. Amen." As he grew older, memory failed him somewhat, and he could not always recall the names of persons. In his protracted services, after penitents were called to the altar, he would sometimes ask the whole congregation to kneel in prayer, then exhort a while, and have a man in his mind that he wanted to lead the prayer; but he could not call the name, and he would say, "Will the brother over there"—but the brother over there did not see the motion of his finger pointing toward him—"will the

brother over there with red hair," or "the brother with a scar on his face," or "the brother with a bald head," or "the brother with a patch on his knee," or "that sister with gray hair, who wears specks, lead the prayer?"

A crowd of toughs, on Kimberland, in Bland county, waylaid and mistreated him, attempted to mob him, because of his severe reproofs; but he was rescued by some friends who happened along about that time. Several months later, the leaders of the gang were at a camp meeting in which Sheffey assisted, and were converted. Sheffey was called on to pray. He commenced his prayer by saying: "O Lord, we thank thee for the great reformation in Bland! We thank thee for converting Bill Drake—be better to him, Lord, than he has been to thy servant. We thank thee for converting Jake Blackleg—help him to live honestly, to be good to his wife, and not abuse the preacher. And Lord, we thank thee for the conversion of old Jim Pickle, and grant that his religion may be sweeter than his name!"

Brother Sheffey was very fond of Brother John Chanode, a layman, who sung well,

prayed well, and was good help in a meeting; but he never could think of Chanode's name. Chanode was not a beauty, and his mouth was like a poor man's lease, from *year* to *year;* but his wife, by the way, was a good woman, and like every other good wife thought her husband was just as good-looking as any man, and she had always been a good friend of Sheffey's. But at a very warm religious service one day Sheffey called everybody to prayer, and said: "I want brother, I want brother John—O, I want that brother with a big mouth to lead the prayer!" That threw the fat in the fire with Chanode's wife. She left the church, and said she would not hear a man preach who would speak of her husband publicly as having "a big mouth!" Chanode enjoyed it.

Sheffey's clean habits and clean instincts led him to try to get everybody else to keep clean. Passing along the road one day, he met a great crowd of darky children near a branch. They had on dirty clothes, and their faces and hands were very dirty. Riding up to the cabin, he called the mother out, and after a kind talk he told her that her chil-

dren's faces needed washing, and, putting his hand into his pocket, drew out a piece of soap: "Here, aunty, wash the children's faces with this, and they will feel a heap better; and, aunty, if you will try a little on yourself, it will do you good!"

It was Father Akin, the Irishman, who on leaving the home of one of his parishioners, where the ashes had been allowed to accumulate until the fireplace was so full it would not hold a backlog, said: "Saster, I want some salt!" "What do you want with the salt, Brother Akin?" "Why, saster, I want to salt the ashes in your fireplace. I am going away to be gone three weeks, and Oi'm afraid they will spoil before I get back!" That was hint enough; the ashes were removed long before his return.

Sheffey, by invitation, had taken dinner with a poor woman, a miner's wife. She had taken special pains to have what Brother Sheffey liked. Everything looked nice and clean, and he ate heartily, then went out to prayer; and when he came to tell the woman good-by, and start on his journey, she said: "Good-by, Brother Sheffey. Come to see me

again when you are passing; I will do the best I can for you, and you know you are always welcome." "Good-by, sister; God bless you. And the next time I come, sister, I wish you would put a little more fire under the oven; the biscuits were not quite done at the bottom."

In many of the communities where he held his revival meetings the converts, for want of proper pastoral oversight, would lapse into indifference, backslide, and the work would have to be done over the next year, or whenever he would go back. Vacillating, undecided men who are devoid of character or moral stamina, require careful training, if you keep them straight. At one of his meetings near the old Lead Mines, one of the mine bosses—Joe Jakes—had been converted, and there was a reformation in his life which lasted for quite a while. Sheffey appointed a leader—Frank Moore, a good steady man—to look after the converts and keep up the interest in the meeting. Joe liked Moore, and always showed a great deal of respect for him; and when he did anything he knew was not exactly right, he was very shy if Moore was

about. After a while Joe backslid, and occasionally would get on a drunk. Brother Moore lived at a village a mile or more from the mines. One day Joe got drunk and went to the village and from one store to another, and on meeting a man would pull a pistol out of his pocket and ask him if he knew of any one that wanted to exchange "No. 38," meaning shots. Directly Moore came along, and was right on Joe before he knew it. He put his pistol up quick, and began to play off sick! "Why, Joe, what's the matter with you?" "O Brother Moore, I'm sick." "You look as if you were, Joe; and I suspect you need some medicine. Have you seen the doctor, Joe?" "No," said Joe. "And, Brother Moore, I've been working for the company nine years, and I've had to pay that doctor one dollar every month, and don't you know he's never given me a drop of medicine; and now I'm sick, and I think he ought to give me some, don't you, Brother Moore?" "Yes I do, and I'm going to call him. Here he comes now, Joe!" Moore gave the doctor the wink as he came in. "Doctor," said Moore, "Joe's sick; he needs medicine; give him

something!" Joe staggered up to the doctor and said: "Yes, doctor, I'm mighty sick; I need something." The doctor looked at Joe's tongue, felt his pulse, shook his head, and said: "Yes, Joe, you are bad sick, and you must have some medicine right now." He poured out a double dose of ipecac, called for some water, made Joe open his mouth and swallow it down. Moore slipped out to hide and watch results. Joe staggered farther up the street. A little later Moore went out to look for him, and Joe was out leaning against the side of a house, heaving, gagging, and making desperate efforts to turn himself inside out! "Joe, has the medicine done you any good?" "No, Brother Moore, not yet [ooch]; but I believe it would [hic] if I could keep the blasted stuff down!"

So the trouble with many others, who profess religion, is like Joe's medicine—it seems to be hard for them to hold on to it or keep it down, when temptations come. Their desires are all right, their motives are good; but they are lacking in the elements of permanency or stability of character. They are deficient in the sticking, staying qualities, the powers of

resistance; and when trouble or temptations come, they yield and return to their old habits and ways, "like a dog to his vomit, or the sow to the wallowing in the mire." But it is hard to get men to be as good as they ought, and Sheffey knew it, and he was always patient toward all men.

Man was made, we are told, "just a little lower than the angels"; and most of them, after they are made, get a great deal lower. The majority are very far from being angels, or even angelic in character and life. Speaking of angels reminds the writer of how eloquent Sheffey could be in his public prayers, when he was happy. He would invariably wind up by saying: "O Lord, when we come to die, grant that we may die shouting; and when soul and body are separated, may a convoy of angels escort our blood-washed spirits to the skies, where we may sweep through the celestial gates into the city of God. There we can dip our wings in the crystal waters of the sea of glory, and then perch upon the tree of life, and shout and sing forever!" He was at a service where the preacher preached a strong, eloquent sermon on the state of the

soul after death; and among the many things that he said was that the soul would not have any wings, would not need them, and if they did they would be greatly in their way and a useless incumbrance. This upset Sheffey's theories about wings; but the preacher ended well, and everybody enjoyed the sermon. Sheffey was called on to pray the concluding prayer. He prayed well, as usual, warmed up toward the close, got happy, and finished by saying: "May we sweep through the celestial gates into the city of God, where we may dip our wings—that is, Lord, if we have any wings! Amen."

CHAPTER VIII.

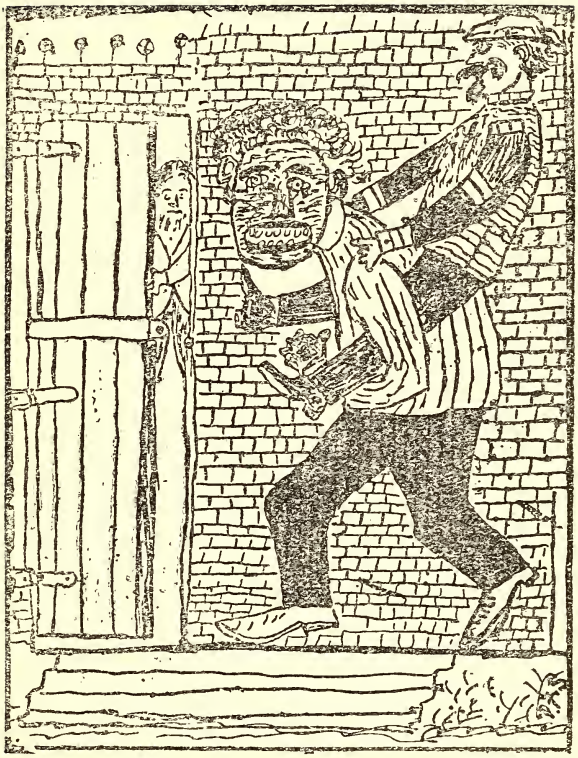
Dreams.

One of the difficulties which the preacher had to encounter was the superstitions of the people with whom he labored. The very poor, the unlearned, and in some localities the better classes, even some of the educated, were largely dominated by ghosts, dreams, and a species of witchery; and I am not sure that he was altogether free from it himself. The fact is, most men—may I not say all men, even the wise, brainy, philosophic, and scientific?—have more or less of what we call superstition, especially when alone, in dark, dangerous places, or lost in a cave! Dreams make impressions that are hard to eradicate from the minds even of the well educated; and they are much worse in the uneducated and sensitively superstitious people, whose whole training and surroundings from infancy to old age have been shrouded with their mysteries and beliefs. The old Hardshell or Primitive Baptists were a people who religiously believed in dreams, and dreams formed a part of their

religious experience. They will tell you that Joseph the patriarch, Jacob's beloved son, was a dreamer, and that the prophets and apostles had visions and dreams; and so a great many superstitious and most ignorant people claim to have revelations made to them in their dreams. In fact, strange things do occur, and peculiar coincidences happen, to strengthen many in their belief. Some are warnings of evil; others are omens of good. Of course we are not to ignore the fact that impressions, that dreams, have been the providential method of God in revealing to men his will—of sending warnings, threatenings, and encouragements to his people. But every time a man overgorges his stomach, and lies down to horrid dreams of death, demons, fiery hissing serpents, of falling mountains, and burning, bursting earthquakes, flaming lakes of fire, ghosts and hobgoblins, is not a revelation from the upper world. What God has done in dreams and through them in the past he may do in the future, and no doubt does in some cases now. Mind does act on mind, spirit on spirit, and an angel may speak to you, as the angel

did to Joseph, the husband of Mary, in a dream. The world is a vast whispering gallery, and the God who made it, and whose presence in his spiritual nature is everywhere, may speak to our spirits, whether awake or asleep. And just as the touch of the electric button or the ring of the telephone bell may call up a distant friend to be spoken to, may not God or his angels on the wings of telepathy speak to us? But the dreams, the visions, that affect the minds of the strangely superstitious among the ignorant and poorer classes, to be found here and there among the mountains, are really amusing.

The old darky who had been used as a cat's-paw in elections by the politician, but never got any reward for his labor, had a dream. He dreamed that he died and went to heaven. When he got there, he knocked at the door. "Hello," said St. Peter, "who comes there?" "Dis am Joe Scracher, an old colored man from Vaginny." "Well, Uncle Joe," said St. Peter, "it does not make any difference about your color, whether you are white or black; but, Joe, are you riding or walking?" "I'se walking." "Well, Joe, I can't let you in; it's



"Just hitch your horse on the outside, General, and come right in."

against our rules to allow anybody in unless he is riding." Well, Joe started back, feeling very much dejected on account of his failure and his inability to own a horse so he could ride; but he had not gotten far away when he met old General Jones footing it along toward heaven. Joe had known the General very well, and had done some hard work for him in elections. He stopped the General, and told him he needn't go any farther, unless he was riding, "because Peter told me it was against the rules to allow any one in 'cept dey's riding." "Well," said General Jones, "Joe, we can fix that; you let me get on your back and ride, and we can both get in." The idea pleased Joe, and the General got on Joe's back and rode up to the gate and knocked. "Hello," said Peter, "who's that?" "General Jones from Virginia." "Are you riding or walking, General?" "I'm riding," said the General. "All right, General; just hitch your horse on the outside, and come in." Of course Joe felt good when he waked up to know that he might have another chance, and still have time to get either a horse or the angels to carry him.

Like everything else human, dreams especially, our interpretations always take the direction we wish them to go. Our surroundings, thoughts, habits, and conscience have a great deal to do with the direction and colorings of our dreams. There was old Squire Cagy and Doctor Wills. Squire Cagy was a horse and cattle trader, owned a big farm, was a merchant, had a nice family, had been reared by religious parents, had deep religious convictions, believed the Bible implicitly; but his fondness for horse-swapping and making money stood in the way of his being religious. Dr. Wills was an educated man, graduated in literary and medical colleges; his parents were very religious and had given their children religious instruction and opportunities beyond the lot of many. From a child the Doctor had been impressed with the importance of preparing for death, judgment, and the future. Cagy and the Doctor were great friends and neighbors; they bought and sold cattle together, went off South with droves of horses, and spent weeks in the Carolinas trading and swapping. Some of their horse-swapping was a little shady, and now and then they

would have trouble with parties to whom they sold or swapped. Cagy, on one of his trips in South Carolina, passed a farmhouse, and the man came out and wanted to swap horses for a good plow horse. Cagy had a horse that he had bought in Virginia because of its bad qualities. He swapped with the farmer, getting good boot, but telling him that the horse would plow or work anywhere. Cagy took the horse he got from the farmer, a better horse than the one he let him have, and sold it for a good price. When he sold out all his stock, he started back for Virginia; and when he got within two or three miles of the farmer's home, he heard that the horse he swapped the farmer had run away with the plow, killed himself and the farmer's work hand, and that the farmer had out a warrant for his arrest, and was only waiting for his return and was looking for him. This scared up Cagy; so when he got near the farm, he took through the woods, expecting to pass around the old farmer's place, and thus escape. When he got about halfway around the farm, and while riding through some brush and timber land, he ran right upon the farmer

and his boys chopping wood. It was a surprise to Cagy; he was in for it, and it was too late to run; and the farmer and sons surrounded him and started to put in their complaints, when Cagy said: "Well, you're the hardest man to find I ever saw. I've been hunting for you everywhere—that horse." "Yes, you old scamp," said the farmer, "you lied to me; said that horse would work. He ran away the first time we hitched him—killed himself and our hired man." "Yes," said Cagy, "that horse I got from you was diseased; he died, and he gave the disease to other horses. I've lost money, and I came to see if you couldn't fix the matter up. Pay some money, or I'll sue you." Well, the matter ended by the farmer paying Cagy fifty dollars as a compromise, and Cagy went on to Virginia.

It was transactions like this that put Cagy to dreaming bad dreams; and when he and Dr. Wills were together, they would relate to one another their dreams. Some weeks after Cagy returned from that trip, Dr. Wills came to the store, and he took him to one side and said: "Doctor, I've had another one of those bad dreams." "What is it, Cagy; what have

you been dreaming about this time?" "It was about the judgment." "What about it, Cagy?" "Well, it was this: I thought the day had come; everybody was there, and Christ was up preaching." "Well, Cagy, what was he preaching about?" "It was the unpardonable sin, as near as I could make it out." "What did he say the unpardonable sin was, Cagy?" "It seemed that he said if anybody had cheated in horse-swapping and the like that was the unpardonable sin." "Well, Cagy, did you think of anybody you had cheated in swapping horses?" "Yes; I thought of that old farmer down yonder in South Carolina, I told you about." "Well, what did you do about it, Cagy?" "I thought Christ said if we could see the party and get it fixed up before he got done preaching, it would be all right; and so I began to hunt for him; but before I could find him, I waked up; and I tell you, Dr. Wills, I've been feeling mighty bad ever since."

The Doctor's dreams were about as frequent and as awful as Cagy's, though a much younger man. The Doctor's father died, afflictions came, conscience was doing its work,

and his dreams were disturbing his slumbers by night and haunting his every movement by day. He went nervously to bed one night. Soon he was in the "dim land of dreams." A trumpet blast, like a clap of thunder, sounded; and suddenly he was called to the judgment. With awful dread and horror, he started amid burning worlds, crumbling mountains, bursting volcanoes, falling stars, blackened sun, bloody moon, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds, all streaked with groans, shrieks, cries, and screams, as he moved on to the place of holding the court of final resort. At last he reached the place, but lo! all was gone. He had intended to appeal to his father for help, but he was not there. The judge was gone, the people gone—the bad gone to hell, the good to heaven—and he was there all alone; and now he began to cry, "Where are they all gone?" and some one, he did not seem to know who, said to him: "The good have gone to heaven, out this way"—pointing in an upward direction. He started on a run in the direction he had been told, determined to get to heaven if there was any chance, or overtake the good on their jour-

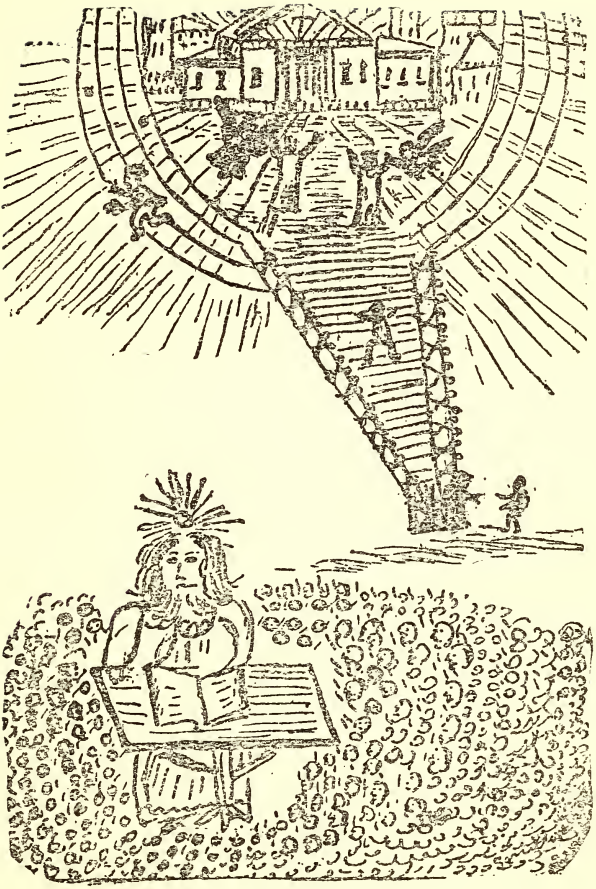
ney. Soon he reached the foot of a hill. It was covered with cedars and limestone ledges. He began to climb the hill, and to take in the surroundings. "Why, this hill is at the back of father's farm; I've been here a thousand times." Soon he reached a large single log house that had neither doors nor windows; and something said, "That is heaven." "Surely that can't be heaven; why, this is right here on my father's place; and I've lived this close to heaven all my life, and did not know it." But he rushed on up to the house, and started to run around, hunting in his agony and distress for the door, but could find none. Just then he ran up on one of the worst men and drunkards he ever knew, and screamed to him: "Ben, is this heaven?" "Yes, Doctor." "Well, where do you get in at?" "Right down here"—pointing to a slick-worn hole under the lower log at the ground, and which looked like a hog hole; "but you can't get in, Doctor; for I tried it, and I know I am as good as you are." That made him feel awful—for that drunkard, "Bad Ben," to claim to be as good as he was. "Well, I am going to try it," said the Doctor. Down he gets on all fours,

and starts to stick his head under. The hole was worn perfectly slick, but was smaller than it looked. He finally got his head under up to his neck; then he began to hear the music—singing, shouting, dancing, everybody happy. He pushed till he got his shoulders under, and the logs began to press down on him heavier and heavier; he made one more desperate effort, and only turned himself enough to see the shouting, happy throng; but the logs were choking him to death, and he began to cry, "Let me in! let me in!" About this time a great big fat-looking Dutchman, with high-heeled stogy boots, came singing, shouting, and jumping toward him. While he was still screaming, "Let me in!" the Dutchman gave him a kick on the head, and he slipped back outside with a thud, as if he had been greased. He awoke gasping for breath; he walked the floor for hours, haunted by the terrors of that dream. As the night waned and drowsiness again began to creep over him, he went back to bed and to sleep. Alas! an awful crash came, as if a bolt hurled by Jove had struck the universe and was grinding it to powder, and a voice louder than thunder com-

THROUGH A HOG HOLE INTO HEAVEN.

manded him to come to judgment. With dread and remorse, like a guilty criminal, he starts; the earth sinks beneath his feet, the heavens blacken as he ascends, and he rushes on, impelled by some mysterious power, to meet the awful Judge. The throne is set; the Judge, the books, the angels, the devils, the dead and living all are there; and horror is pictured on their whitened but upturned faces and every eye is fixed on the Judge, and with breathless silence they await their sentence of destiny. The Doctor feels that he is lost—no chance for him. He glances with guilty conscience at a frowning Judge, and turns to gaze at a terror-stricken throng, then looks a little farther, and out yonder just a short way is heaven. There is the gate, and from the gate an ever-widening stairway, with balustrades on either side, leading up and out in widening circles, with seats arranged in amphitheater style, stretching away in every direction far beyond the range of human eye. He walks toward the gate, and wonders if there would be any chance to steal in without the consent of the Judge; for he knows that when his time is come, his name called, he will be condemned

and sent away. He gets close to the gate; his eyes gaze with longing desire as he takes in rank above rank, tier above tier, of the blood-washed taking their places, in white robes, along the shining seats that glitter far above him. The gate is closed; there stands an old man with long white beard, key in hand—it is Peter—and opens and closes the gate. Now and then a man or woman comes up, hands him a ticket, and passes in. But there comes a man! He hands Peter a ticket; Peter looks at it and shakes his head; they get into a quarrel, a desperate wrangle; and then the Doctor gets closer. "I believe I could steal in while they are disputing." The thought was father of the act. He sidles up, slips easily past the angry and quarreling doorkeeper; and now he is in. He stealthily, softly goes up, tiptoeing as he goes, faster and faster, up and on up he goes; now he turns—out, out, far out, along the shining seats, far out of sight of the Judge and motley throng, and away from the gaze of the angry gateman; and now he finds a seat. "Here I will sit down and sing forever!" Now he sits down; he looks at the seats—how highly polished, how smooth and



"Stole in, but slipped out of heaven."

slick, and they are slightly inclined; and the thought came with a flash: "I might slip off!" And sure enough he began to slip—bump, bump, down, down, bump, bump, faster and faster down the slick and slippery way, with ever-increasing rapidity, until with lightning speed he shot down bump, bump, bump, until he came to the last seat; and he looked over —there was no bottom; he grabbed the seat and screamed, "Catch me!" He awoke, and was clasping the bed rail and screaming at the top of his voice. "There," said Sheffey when he heard the dream related, "if you hadn't clung to that seat and waked up when you did, you'd a been a goner!"

These dreams led to their conversion. Squire Cagy died an elder in a mountain Presbyterian church, and Dr. Wills has been a preacher of the gospel for many years.

CHAPTER IX.

Music—Fiddle and Sing.

In many places, in the country churches the organ is looked upon as an innovation, and instrumental music in a religious service is regarded as sinful by some people. They want congregational singing—everybody to praise the Lord in song—and consider the human voice "God's harp of a thousand strings," and the only instrument that should be used in public worship. There are congregations where the singing, led by a competent, trained vocal leader, is really good. At old camp meetings, at times, the music was charming and overpowering. Now and then you will find a community where they have had proper training, with some good voices to lead, and you will be surprised at the good vocal music; but in most places, now, the singing is wretched. Preachers have trouble in getting leaders or have to lead themselves, and sometimes the song part of the service is not very inspiring. Bob Sheffey in his younger days

had a strong, clear voice; but as he aged, and with the constant use he made of it, it grew harsher or cracked, somewhat nasal, having the twang of the wild goose. Many days has he sung at least ten hours out of the twenty-four, and kept it up for weeks, months, and years. I do not know that he ever made an open fight against the organ, but, like many of the old preachers, he never had much to say for it. It was always associated with the fiddle, as they called the violin; and the fiddle and banjo and dance were all synonymous in their minds.

Father Brooks preached at a mining town where the miners were nearly all English or Welsh—had been used to having instrumental music in their church at home, and they wanted to have it in their church at the mines; but he fought it. They all liked him, but persisted in their efforts. They were not able to buy an organ, but they had a bass and two or three small violins, with good players, and they were bound to have their music. At his next service they were on hand with all their fiddling musical instruments. He opposed, they insisted, and he at last reluc-

tantly gave in. With hurt feelings, he got up, read his hymn, and then said with dignified but great emphasis: "We will fiddle and sing on page 560." A broad grin and giggle from the congregation like to have upset the service.

An old Baptist preacher, who had always lived in the country, preached in the country, reared his large family of boys and girls in the country, after he was getting old wanted to visit his two sons who lived in a distant Southern city, had gotten rich, and were anxious for their dear old father to come to see them. So he went; but he happened to be there on a Sunday when the regular pastor was absent, and the people said: "Why not get Brother Jones to preach for us? His two sons are the best members of our church, and it would be nothing but respect for them as well as for their father to be invited to preach." So they waited on him, and after much persuasion he at last consented to preach on Sunday morning. The day arrived. The white-haired old man was there in his plain homespun. The leader of the choir went to the pulpit to get his hymns. He did not understand it. "Broth-

er Jones, the choir want your hymns." "The what wants my hymns, did you say?" "The choir." He had never heard the word choir before; if so, not in that sense. He was given to understand that they would use the organ, and the choir would do the singing. He objected; told them that was not the way to hold religious service, and that up in his country they'd never heard of such a thing. "No, you can't get my hymns. I will read the hymn, and then we will sing two lines at a time, and I can raise my own chune." At last the service began. He read his hymn, and before he had time to line the first two lines and begin the tune, the organ struck up, the choir found the hymn in their books and started off on the music—bass, tenor, alto, and soprano, all the parts—strange music to the old preacher; and when they got through the first verse, while the organ was playing the interlude, he waved them down and said: "If the koiyer is gwine to lead the song, they must please all sing the same chunes."

Over on Tug River an old local Methodist preacher by the name of Ford lived with his family. The old man had little education,

could barely read, but was very egotistic—prayed long prayers, and was long-winded with his sermons. His son John, who was the express image of his father, always accompanied his father to his appointment. John had a very high opinion of his father, both as a man and as a preacher; his father had a very high opinion of his son—it was a mutual admiration society between sire and son. John always led the singing for his father; in fact, to old man Ford, John was the best singer in the world; and he didn't want, and would not have, any one to lead songs for him if John was around. And John thought his daddy (as he called him at home), or Brother Dad (as he called him away from home), was the greatest preacher in the world. "The only objection anybody could have to my son John," the old man used to say, "is that he is sometimes a little sleepy-headed." The old man and John went over to Elkhorn to hold a night meeting. They were tired; the congregation gathered late, but a song was sung, and the old man prayed an unusually long prayer. Many of his congregation were asleep when the prayer closed, John among

the number; but they all waked up enough to rise from their knees. The old man read a long hymn on page 136, C.M.: "Shepherds, rejoice, lift up your eyes." Then he lined out two lines and said: "Brother John Ford, my son, please sit and carry the tune." But John was nodding, and did not catch what his father said. "What did you say, Brother Dad?" "I said, Brother John Ford, my son, please sit and carry the tune." "Please gin it out again, Brother Dad; I didn't quite catch the words."

CHAPTER X.

Beware of Dogs—Our Dog.

Were you ever in a dog racket at a church? Well, you've been fortunate—or unfortunate. Dogs, like everything else, are very good and useful in their place; but they ought to have no place in the house of God. "Without are dogs." (Bible.) That is one very plain text of Scripture that every preacher who preaches in the village or country church should occasionally explain to his hearers. Dogs are a great nuisance, especially when they form a part of a worshiping congregation. There are sections of country where dogs are about the only live stock that the inhabitants own, except children. In the cabins of the poor, especially about the mining districts, you usually find from eight to twelve sons and daughters, about the same number of dogs, a few cats, but rarely any chickens, cows, or pigs. To be sure, the farmer must have his dog, his shepherd to drive the cows or herd the sheep; but, besides the useful shepherd, many of them add the useless cur and the

noisy, quarrelsome fice. The pugs, bench-legs, and all the other breeds and varieties of dogs, are all well represented, each having their special friends among the *genus homo*, and are to be found in different communities. A dog fight will draw a bigger crowd and create more excitement than an Italian organ grinder and his monkey. Bob Sheffey had his troubles, just as every other preacher whose work has been among the country people. Every man thinks his dog the best, and you had just as well make an unkind remark about the owner as to undertake to muddy the character of his dog. His neighbor's dog may kill sheep, but "our" dog does not! Then "our" dog never runs about; "our" dog is so obedient and mindful. "Our dog," said the Arkansas traveler, "will always go out of the house when you tell him, or under the bed." "O no, stranger; come in; he won't bite you. Why, that's our dog," they will tell the frightened stranger when he sees the bristling, growling canine coming with all his bulldog fury at him. Talk about or abuse that man's dog—you may make slighting remarks about the character of his wife or daughter, some

worthless scamp may whip his son, and he may not resent that; but you start a bad report about his dog, and you'll have him to whip, or leave the neighborhood.

Father Akin, the Irish preacher, was never a very dear lover of dogs, and many ups and downs did he have with the canine intruders at his services. He had charge of a camp meeting at Cripple Creek one year, and the dogs gave him a great deal of trouble. They were into everything, and all over the camp—barking, howling, and disturbing everybody, and no one more than the old preacher. So he determined to rid the camp of the pests. Sunday afternoon he got all the boys he could find, and told them what he wanted. Of course that was fun for them, and they were right in for it. "Chase every cur off of the hill, boys; stone them, kill them, drive them all away!" "All right"; and out they started, the old preacher with them. And such a time they did have—dogs yelling, boys screaming, rocks flying. The old man ran until he was out of breath, and returned to camp to rest a while, leaving the boys in full pursuit of the dog offenders. When he got nearly to his

tent, he met his little grandson George. Now some one had given the little fellow a dog, of which the child was very fond, but the old man had forgotten it. George was crying as if his little heart would break. "Well," said Father Akin, "what is the matter with my little boy?" "O grandpa, the boys are killing my dog! Yonder they go now. Look! they will kill him—O—O!" At that Father Akin took out after the boys on a dead run, shouting, "Stop, boys! Come back, boys! Stop! stop! Don't kill that dog, boys! That's our dog!"

Of course there are dogs and dogs. But "my" dog makes a great deal of difference, and puts a different coloring on the character of the animal in question. A bad dog, like a bad boy, is hard to control. Like Mary's little lamb, everywhere the master or mistress goes the dog is sure to follow. Some dogs know when Sunday comes, and will start in advance to church. It is such a good place to meet other dogs that they can't resist the temptation. And then, if it happens to be a basket dinner meeting, O what a high old time they have fighting, growling at other

dogs, and picking up the scraps of bread, gnawing the chicken bones, and nosing into the baskets!

Some people religiously try to keep their dogs at home, but do not always succeed. Of course they try only moral suasion. If they would oftener try a good switch, or collar and chain, their efforts would be crowned with greater success; and I might add that in many cases a good dose of strychnine would be far better. But dogs haven't any more respect for Sunday than any other day, only they get more and better food, and don't have to be kicked and cuffed about quite so much (except when they go to church); and perhaps when their masters get on their Sunday clothes, and fix to go to church, they are not so ill, and treat their dogs with more respect than on other days.

It is about as hard to keep dogs out of church as it is to get some of their masters in; and, once in, it is hard to get one out without the other. No one needs more sympathy than the sexton, whose duty is not only to keep up the fire but to keep out the dogs.

Father Akin had as great aversion for fine

and gaudy dress as he had dislike for dogs. At a quarterly meeting he announced that on Sunday morning, at 9:30 sharp, there would be a love feast, or experience meeting, to last one hour, and all who expected to be present must be in the church promptly at half past nine; that the doors would be closed, and not opened until time for preaching at half past ten. And I don't want the meeting disturbed by your coming in after the service is opened." When the hour arrived Sunday morning, the doors were closed, the sexton was told to fasten the door and not allow any one to come in. The meeting opened with songs, prayers, talks, by old and young; but every now and then some one would get in at the door, and Father Akin would tell the sexton not to let anybody else in. But in spite of the sexton, people kept on coming in at the door, and the meeting was warming up, the interest increasing; but Father Akin was very nervous, because so many were getting in and he constantly telling the sexton not to allow it. Finally Father Akin saw through the window a large, stout young woman, stylishly dressed, a very showy hat on, ride up to the

block, get down, and start for the church. He determined that she should not come in, but he was afraid to risk the sexton; and so he went back to the door, bolted it, and then got against it so as to insure its not being opened. The woman came up and knocked, but no response. She knocked again, but no answer. She took hold of the bolt and began to shake it, but the door did not open; then she began to shake it harder, then to push. Father Akin braced himself against the door. With clinched teeth and with all his strength he tried to bar it from the feminine intruder; but she was muscular herself, and a little too stout for her aged opponent in the contest. She threw her strength against the door. Father Akin saw that she was coming in, in spite of his efforts to keep her out; and with a snarl upon his lips, and grating teeth, he stepped back and pulled the door wide open, saying: "Come in, saster—hat, feathers, and all!"

Many of the dogs are as difficult to keep out as Akin's gaudily dressed woman. In one of the rich coves of the Cumberland Mountains a memorial or funeral sermon was to be preached. It was for a prominent, good citi-

zen of the neighborhood, and on that day everybody for miles around was out. Father Joe Crawford, a Presbyterian preacher, and a young Methodist preacher were to conduct the service. The little low log schoolhouse was crowded—men, women, children, dogs; there was not room for another one. The dogs were all under the benches—not one to be seen—and the benches, aisle, altar, pulpit, platform, all crowded with people, and the door and yard were full. Father Crawford, though nearly eighty, was tall and straight, and when standing in the little pulpit his head was not far from the low clapboard roof. He was about half through his sermon; everything was as still as death—no noise save the well-modulated, plaintive voice of the eloquent old divine. All at once there was a low guttural growl emanating from beneath the thick and heavily laden benches; then, from another quarter, there was a quick, snappish bark; then a keen, sharp whine. The whines, growls, and snapping barks increased rapidly, until every foot of space in the whole building was instinct with dog. Another guttural growl came from where the first one emana-

ted; then an awful plunge, and two dogs—somewhere beneath the drapery of skirts and human feet—had clinched. Then a woman screamed, the whole audience arose, and the sensation could not have been greater if an earthquake had shaken the mountains down. Here came the dogs—big ones, little ones—all growling, snapping, whining, and leaping over the screaming women. Some of the men were trying to get their wives and babies out; everybody made a rush for the door; those outside were trying to get in, despite the howling, fighting dogs, crying babies, screaming women, and excited men. The old preacher climbed up on one end of the pulpit, the young preacher on the other, to get out of the way of the fighting dogs. The women and children were dragged out, many of them hurt. The excited men, and owners of the dogs, now had possession of the service. The getting out of the women and children made room for the outside dogs to get in, in time to have a share in the fight. One man got a club and started in to drive all the dogs out; but he hit the wrong dog, and the owner grabbed him by the throat. About that time others interfered,

A DOG FIGHT AT CHURCH.

and that part of the racket was stopped. After a terrible struggle the dogs were dragged out, but the rest of the service had to be postponed until the afternoon. When the dogs were all driven out, the old parson climbed down from his perch on the pulpit and walked to the door; and, on getting the attention of the quarreling men, excited women, and crying babies, he said: "The rest of this service will be postponed until three o'clock. All come back, but leave or send your dogs home. I have no gospel for your dogs, and they are not invited!" It was a memorable day, if not much of a memorial service.

It is said that every dog has his day, and that was one of them. How often have all the good impressions made by an eloquent sermon been destroyed by somebody's frisky little dog trotting down the aisle and up to the pulpit, to bark at the preacher or to play hide and seek with the drapery of the book board. How many times has Bob Sheffey had to stop preaching while a brother "put the dog out." Many a poor preacher, no doubt, wishes that he could dispose of the dogs as old Parson

Brooks, a Kentucky preacher, did—though unintentional on his part. He was requested by a friend to call on an old farmer and his family, talk to them about their moral condition, pray with them, and urge them to come to church. It was something unusual for a preacher to visit the farmer; and when Parson Brooks went to his house, the men were all in a near-by field at work. The wife called her husband, and after a short talk from the preacher he proposed to have prayers with them. All the family were called in; the preacher read a lesson from the Bible, sung a few verses of a song, and asked all to kneel in prayer. The parson was a large, stout man, with a loud, strong voice. It was such an unusual transaction that the dog and children hardly knew what to make of it. The dog, a bench-legged fice, began to whine and growl, and a great big, strapping, barefooted boy, who was very much interested in the proceeding, had his fingers over his eyes merely to shade them, and through the back of the chair beside which he was kneeling gazed intently at the praying preacher and the growling, excited pup. The dog grew fiercer, and

"There, Pap! that er preacher's killed our purp."

would run toward the preacher, bristles all turned the wrong way and teeth showing, barking louder and louder. But the more noise the dog made, the louder the preacher would pray. Each time the fice would get closer to the preacher, and rush by him as though he would tear the intruder into shreds if he could get close enough to him. The louder and more vehement the preacher became, the worse the dog's temper showed itself; and, becoming a little more bold, the fice rushed up to the preacher. The preacher caught the dog, but never ceased his prayer. The more terrific the screams and yelps of the now captive dog, the louder the parson thundered in prayer. His strong arm and hand tightly gripped the frightened canine, so it could not bite; and, catching its two hind legs, he gave it a swing and threw it out of the door, but with such force that as the flying dog went out its head struck the door facing, knocking its brains in every direction; and with one long, loud yelp the dog lay on the ground, a mangled corpse! The boy's eyes had watched the whole proceeding; and when he saw the bleeding, gasping, dying

dog spread out on the yard, it was too much for him. He rose, tears dripping from his eyes, and, trying to raise his voice above that of the roaring preacher, shouted: "There, pap, that er preacher has killed our purp!"

CHAPTER XI.

Stillhouses—Prayer.

The Arabs have a proverb which says, "There are three things with which a man ought never to trifle: God, the devil, and death." There are sections in the Virginia mountains where the moonshiner and wildcat distiller never dreaded to see a United States revenue officer any more than they did Bob Sheffey. His name and prayers were always a terror to evildoers, and especially to the distiller and manufacturer of ardent spirits and intoxicants. The "illicit distiller," the man who runs a "blind tiger," will shoot down the revenue officer, that he may escape detection or prosecution by human courts, which in his opinion seek to curtail his liberties. He cares nothing for being branded as an outlaw, when he feels that the one who brands him is trampling on his inalienable human rights. But he fears to trifle with God; and to be considered an outlaw in His government, to be the object of His wrath, is more than he is willing to undertake. Neither

would he touch or trifle with the prophet of the Lord. He may dread to see him, he may shun his presence, but to lay violent hands upon him he would no more dare to do than he would defy Deity to arms. Many a man has been deterred from making whisky by the stories of miraculous answers to Bob Sheffey's prayers. And these stories are not fabrications, but are facts that can be verified by the best citizens in Tazewell, Bland, and Giles counties, Virginia. In some instances, a stillhouse has been blown down, another washed away by a sudden flood, and another by a stroke of lightning which destroyed or burned up the whole establishment. Who does not dread the storm king, the lightning's death-dealing glare, when they are harnessed and used as ministers of wrath? And when, as in the case of Bob Sheffey, God turns over to him these instruments of destruction—hangs the keys in his girdle, that he may lock and unlock them at his pleasure —well may his prayers and entreaties be both feared and respected.

The parties had been warned, Sheffey had gone to their homes, prayed with them, en-

treated them to give up the stillhouse; and then, "Sweet Lord, if he will not give up this damning business, spare him, but take away, by wind or fire or flood, the stillhouse," he would kindly pray. It was such prayers as this and their answers that had struck terror to every evildoer; and to have Sheffey pray against them or their business was to have God and his angels their sworn enemies. In one place Sheffey had to preach at a country church. He got there an hour before preaching time; walked out, as was his custom, to pray while the congregation gathered, and when some half mile from the church he looked down in a deep gorge, and could see smoke. At first he thought it might be some poor man's cabin, but on closer inspection he found it was a stillhouse; and the owner was actually running it on Sunday. Sheffey got down and commenced to pray, louder and louder. The distiller heard the noise, and walked out to learn what was the matter. He heard distinctly Sheffey's prayer, and he was praying for the distiller: "O Lord, he is desecrating thy Sabbath; he is keeping his wife and children from church; he is making the li-

quid fire of hell to ruin his neighbors and to damn his own soul. O Lord, stop him before he further goes. Send a flood to wash his still away; let the lightnings of thy wrath burn it up; but, Lord, spare him—he may have a poor wife or helpless little babes. But, Lord, if he will not give up his distilling, paralyze his body; and if that will not save him, take him out of the world, where his influence will not be over his helpless children." The man had heard enough. He rushed back into the still-house, withdrew the fire from under the still, locked the door, and went to his home, some half mile away. When he reached the house his face was pale, his looks betrayed something unusual, and his wife, when she went to meet him, said: "Husband, what's the matter?" "Get ready, wife, quick; get the children ready; there's going to be preaching at the schoolhouse, and we are all going. Sheffey's going to preach." He told his wife of the prayer. She wept; so did he. They were at church when penitents were called; he went to the altar, made a profession of religion, then publicly related how he made the whisky —worked Sundays—and how Sheffey found

and prayed for him. "And now, neighbors," said he, "as God is my Judge, I have made my last run." And he had; for the next day he called in his neighbors, razed the stillhouse to the ground, knocked the heads out of the barrels, and from that day on lived a sober, upright life.

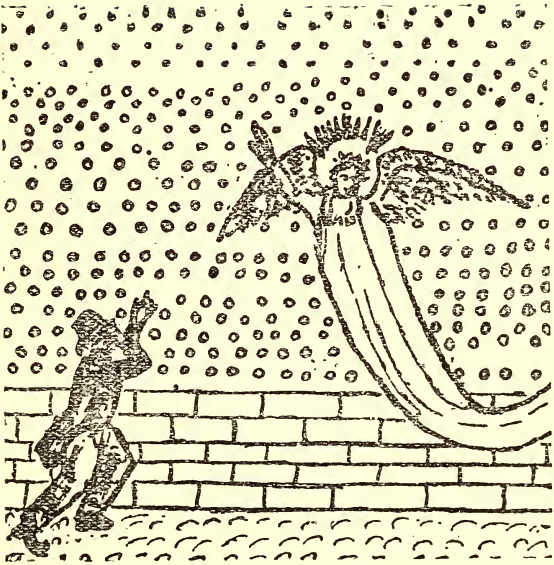
Dave Larkum was getting up in years, had been through the war, was always a hard worker, and was a thrifty kind of a man. But Dave was easily influenced, and would drink occasionally. Sometimes he owned a saloon, and once he bought and ran a regularly licensed distillery, notwithstanding the fact that his friends protested, and he really had conscientious scruples about doing such things. The piety of his old mother, the religious training of his early youth, haunted him until at times he had great remorse of conscience. It was while he had the stillhouse that he had the worst blow of his whole career as a dealer and user of intoxicants. Prayers had gone up to a throne of grace for him, preacher friends had written to him, he had had bad dreams, and all these warnings were pressing heavily upon his mind. Finally he was taken

sick. Erysipelas had caused his body to swell up; sores had broken out all over his body; his eyes were swollen until he was unable to see for weeks. One night he waked out of a terrible nightmare, and told his friends to send for the preacher in a hurry; and they did. Well, when the preacher arrived, Dave said: "I have had an awful night. I dreamed that I died and started to heaven, but only got to the outside wall. I could see no door or window, no way of entrance. The wall seemed to be mountains high—was a solid, smooth, perpendicular wall, stretching hundreds of feet above me. I looked to the right and left, and saw nothing save the same smooth, ledgeless, widening wall, which was lost in the distant horizon. I began to cry and ask, 'How can I get in?' when, without noise or motion, there stood beside me the most beautiful creature I ever beheld. She had such a lovely robe of whiteness; and oh! that face—such beauty in eye and nose and mouth—that lovely golden hair; and the angel (I reckon it was) looked at me so kindly when I said, 'How do you get into heaven?' The angel turned and, pointing her finger to-

ward the wall, said: "Don't you see those holes?' I looked, and for the first time discovered that the wall was full of little round holes about an inch in diameter, just perforating the wall, and resembling the flues in the boiler of an engine at my stillhouse. But I could see through the thick walls on the other side; and oh, the flowers that were blooming, the birds that were singing, the music that floated to my ears on the sweet, fragrant-scented air through those holes in the wall! I never saw such lovely people as I gazed at in my glimpses through that strangely perforated wall. I said to the angel: 'How is a man to get in? These holes are too small.' 'Yes,' said the angel, 'they are too small for you; you can't get in one of them.' 'Well, how can I get into heaven?' said I. Then the angel looked at me so kindly, and said: 'David, you will have to go back and dust up a little.' 'Will I have to go back to the earth again?' 'Yes.' 'Can I come back again and get in?' 'Yes,' said the angel, 'as soon as you dust and clean up'; and the angel was gone, and I waked up. I sent for you. I want you to pray for me, and I shall never

'still' any more, and I am going to dust up so I can get through that little hole into heaven."

The many amusing incidents in connection with Sheffey, the blind tiger, and the mountain still, which are told by the most solid people of the country where they happened, serve only to illustrate the goodness of the man, his power with God, and the extreme respect and reverence that everybody had for him. He believed in prayer and lived much on his knees, and there was no earthly power or attraction that could keep him from his devotions. An old preacher in the mountains stopped to spend the night with a farmer, a member of his Church. That same night Judge Rich and his wife from Lexington, Ky., who drove up in a handsome turn-out and asked to stay all night, were taken in. When bedtime came, the old farmer, Mr. Butler, got the family Bible and gave it to the minister, for family worship. He said to him in a whisper: "You had better make the service short, as the Judge probably is not accustomed to such things." The old man said, "Very well, very well"; but he looked pained. He read

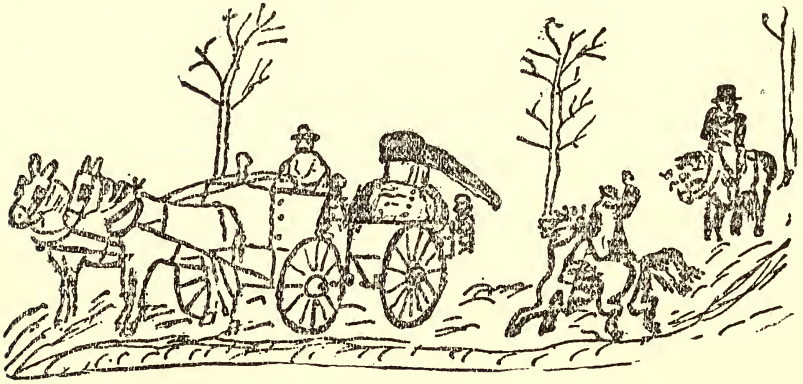


"You'll have to go back and dust up a little, Davy, before you can get through."

only two verses of Scripture, and then knelt down to pray. "O Lord," he prayed, "we are very poor and needy creatures, and we know that thou art able and willing to supply all our wants; but Mr. Butler says that Judge Rich and his wife from Lexington, who are with us, are not used to family worship; and, however needy we are, there is no time to spare in telling thee our wants. Amen." The Judge was greatly taken aback, and so was Mr. Butler, his host. Between them they persuaded the faithful old man to continue his prayer, which he did with great earnestness and spiritual fervor.

It is such men as that dear old man of God, such men as Bob Sheffey, such men as Elijah, that make Ahab and every other wrongdoer fear and tremble. Peery Gussabus owned a rich little farm in Tazewell, not far from the courthouse. He did not have much education, was somewhat superstitious, loved his dram, and always had an idea that making brandy was a money-making business. He didn't want to still, but he loved to drink the brandy, so did his wife; but if there was any money in it, he wanted it. He was a little bit

afraid; he had heard of Sheffey's prayers, and of the stillhouses that had been destroyed in answer to the prayers of that good man. Besides, Peery Gussabus did not want to die; in fact, he was afraid of death, he was afraid of God, the devil, and also of Bob Sheffey. He never could bear to hear a thunder storm, and as soon as he saw one gathering he always went to bed—got on a feather bed, and had himself covered with one. He always dodged when it thundered, and he seemed to have a secret dread that he might be killed by a stroke of lightning. The apple crop was good that year; and, while he had no apples on his own place, he bought a fine crop from another party, some three miles away; and he had the still. Well, he loaded the still on a wagon, sent his driver on, then mounted his own horse and started to follow. He was a large, fat man, and had to ride slowly; so he did not overtake the wagon until he had nearly reached the place. Just then he saw a man riding slowly, coming toward him. Who was it? The man stopped, and asked the driver whose still that was and where it was going. The driver pointed back



"Turn that wagon! Drive that still home! I don't want to make that brandy, nohow!"

to the owner and drove on. Peery Gussabus was scared in an inch of his life, for who should it be but the veritable Bob Sheffey, and he would as soon meet the devil. "Brother, is that your still yonder?" "Yes, Brother Sheffey," he said with a meek, tremulous voice. "What are you going to do with it, brother?" "I was just going to make a little brandy—just a leetle bit, Brother Sheffey, for sickness, you know." "Well, Brother, did you talk to the Lord about it? Don't you know you ought not to do that?" "I know it's not right, Brother Sheffey; but I was just going to make such a little!" "Well, Brother Gussabus, let us both get down and pray about this matter before we go any farther." "Hold on, Brother Sheffey, you needn't pray; I am going back. Here, Jake, turn that wagon round, and take that old still home; I don't want to make that old brandy nohow. Just drive back, Jake." And back home he did go; and that was the last of his apple stilling.

CHAPTER XII.

Spring Houses—Refuge from Dogs—Joys.

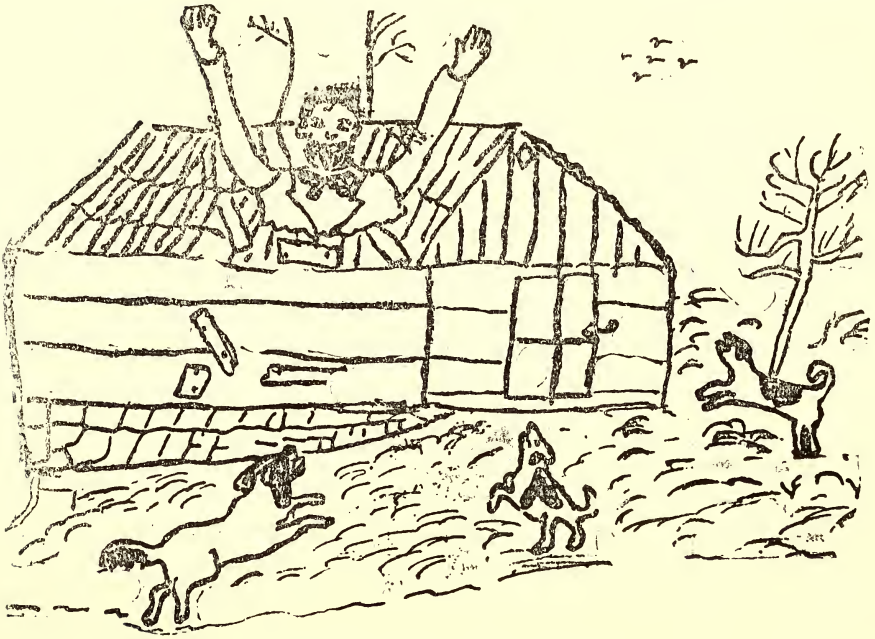
"Laugh and grow fat." If laughter gives health to the body, joy or cheerfulness and contentment should add strength to the muscle and bone of moral character and flesh or fatness to the spiritual nature. Bob Sheffey's religion was a happy religion. He was a rejoicing Christian. He lived so close to God that he could feel the warmth of his presence, and it kindled into a glow the altar fires of his own heart. He loved honey because it was sweet to the taste, but he loved religion because it was sweeter than honey and the honeycomb to his soul. He loved to eat because food was good to the taste, but he loved the Lord because he could say, with David, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." He praised the Lord for everything. His heart was full of gratitude. At an Annual Conference once, where he was merely a visitor and spectator, after listening for two or three days to the dry statistics, he became rest-

PREACHER CHASED BY THE DOGS.

ive, and with hat in hand he tiptoed to the bishop's chair and whispered into his ear (it was Bishop George F. Pierce, of Georgia): "Bishop, if you will excuse me I will go out in the country and hold a few prayer meetings around for two or three days, and see if I can't get happy; this is a mighty cold kind of a meeting you're having here now. I will come back in a few days, and I hope you'll have it warmed up just a little!" The bishop gave his consent with a smile.

Every man has his weak as well as his strong points of character. Sheffey was morally a hero, but physically a coward at times. Moses showed the "white feather" when God told him to throw his rod upon the ground, and it became a serpent, and the old warrior ran from it. Elijah, the bravest of the brave, ran from a woman, Jezebel, not because he was a bachelor, but because he was afraid of a bad woman. Some women, with hearts brave enough to capture and imprison the most ferocious, lion-hearted man, will gather their skirts and skip from a bug or a mouse. Bob Sheffey was not afraid of man, but he was afraid of a biting dog; and the approach of

that ferocious beast always put his legs in a condition that he could not control his locomotion, and they would fly away with his body. But one thing, Sheffey was not afraid to shout, even though chased by the enemy. He went into a new, strange neighborhood to hold a Sunday service. After the morning service he was invited home with a man who did not live far from the church. It was a beautiful home, situated on a gradual slope whose summit overlooked the entire valley. Surrounding the elegant mansion were several acres of large, shady sugar trees, and the entire grove was covered with blue grass, making it a lovely lawn. The dinner was to taste, so far as the preacher was concerned, for it included chicken and dumpling, light rolls and coffee, butter and honey, and many other things thrown in, that gave weight and dignity in an argument with a man's hungry stomach. When dinner was over, he excused himself and went off to pray until he got happy. After he had gotten happy, he did not find any suitable shouting place, so he came back to the house, called the host out and said to him: "Brother, would you have any



"Glory to God for spring houses!"

objection to me shouting under one of those sugar trees in your lovely yard?" "Not at all, Brother Sheffey; shout as much as you please and wherever you please; make yourself at home." He selected a nice tree, under whose shady branches the ground was covered with a soft carpet of velvety evergreen grass and moss. He lay down on the grass and began to shout, "Glory, glory, halleluiah—bless the Lord!" Now that was something new about that place, and the dogs—and there were several of them, but up to this time they had not made their presence known—when they heard the shouts of the strange voice and the clapping hands, showed their antipathy, and started with growls and barks to investigate and chase off the intruder. Now Sheffey was afraid of dogs, and when he heard them coming he bounced to his feet and began to look for a place of refuge. The dogs were between him and the house, and that cut off his safety in that direction; and here they came, "Bow-wow!"—so he took to his heels, off down the hill, the dogs in hot pursuit. Sheffey was running for life, and the now excited canines were increasing their speed and

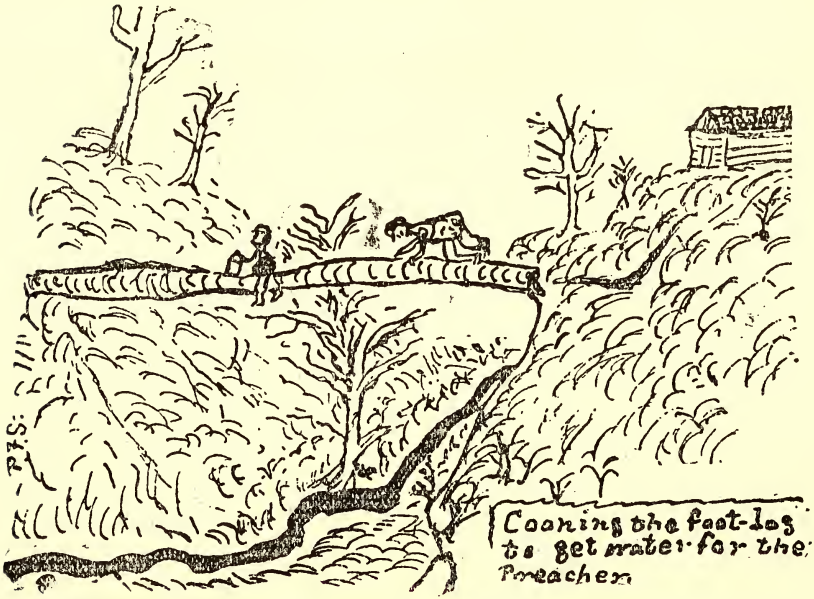
noise, and it was nip and tuck who would beat in the race. At the foot of the hill was an old low spring house, with a moss-covered roof, that had been standing there for years, and it was the only place in sight that offred to the fleeing, frightened refugee the least shred of safety; so he made for it, and, giving one tremendous spring, landed upon its moss-covered roof; but alas! the old roof melted like cobwebs, and down he went through the roof, splashing into the water, among crocks, churns, butter jars, fragments of broken roof, shingles, cups, and ladles. But as soon as Sheffey could disentangle himself from the débris of the wreck, he poked his head and shoulders out, all covered and spattered with buttermilk, clapped his hands and shouted: "Halleluiah! Glory to God for spring houses!"

CHAPTER XIII.

Trouble—Infidel and Parson.

"Man," we are told, "is of few days and full of trouble." Bob Sheffey had his troubles; and so of every other man, but of course not always in the same manner. He was as tenacious as a bulldog. Sheffey, like Davy Crockett, always wanted to be sure he was right; and when he felt that he was, he was as persistent as the proverbial turtle bite—never let go until it thundered! When he started in to chase a sinner, there was no let up until there was a surrender. To some, especially the supersensitive, this made him a little wearisome. A young preacher was conducting a revival in the mountains of Lower East Tennessee. The meeting from the start was very interesting, and increased daily until the whole community was aroused. The altar was crowded with penitents at every service, scores were being converted, and the Church was greatly revived. It was noticed that two young men, who had been in regular attendance, would always leave the house

just as penitents were called, and would not come back any more until they supposed all efforts to get sinners to the altar had ceased. One rainy night the young preacher delivered a very warm, touching appeal to sinners, then called for penitents. Every sinner in the house responded but those two young men; rainy as it was, they went out. The preacher called all the Christians up to the altar to pray for the penitents; and just as he called on a good old brother to lead the prayer, the two young men came back into the house on account of the heavy rain, as there was no shelter on the outside. The preacher himself did not kneel, but while the old brother was praying he walked slowly down the aisle, encouraging the others as he went. He finally came to the two young men, and putting his hands on the shoulders of each, said: "Young men, don't you want to be Christians?" "Yes, sir," they both replied. "Why, then, do you not come to the altar? Your friends are very anxious about you." "We don't feel like it," they said. "Well, won't you come to-night?" "No, sir; not to-night." "All right, boys; I hope you will feel like it



"I'd rather go to the mourners' bench than to carry water for that little preacher."

before the meeting is over. And by the way, boys, you look like nice, clever young men, and I am almost perishing for water. All are at the altar but you; would you mind going over to the cave spring and bringing me a bucket of good cold water?" "No, sir; we won't mind; we will do it with pleasure." And they picked up the bucket and started in the dark, rainy night to get the water. The preacher went back to the altar, and in the excitement of his work forgot all about the boys. Now the church was located on a rocky, brush-covered hill, and to get the water they had to go down a steep, slick path, cross a high foot log over a large, deep creek, and then through a muddy swamp for over a quarter of a mile. They said they had to feel their way in the darkness down the slick, steep hill to the foot log, then cross the log on their all fours, and wade in mud to the shoe mouth, to get to the cave. One prayer after another was prayed, song after song was sung; many of the penitents were converted; two hours elapsed, and the preacher had gotten up to close the meeting, when in came the boys, their clothes dripping with rain and legs mud-

dy to their knees. They placed the water on a bench, and with their hats for fans they sat down, panting for breath and fanning to cool off. They waited to catch the preacher's eye, and motioned him to come and get his water; which he did, thanking the boys for their kindness. He then closed by announcing services for the next morning and night, pronounced the benediction, went to his home, dismissing the boys and the water trip forever from his mind. At the next morning service, when mourners were called, the first to reach the altar were the two young men, and at the night service they professed conversion. That night the meeting closed. In a few days Mr. Clepper, the sheriff, met the boys, and, congratulating them, said: "Boys, I was certainly glad to hear that you have professed religion." "Yes," said one of them, "we would rather go to the mourners' bench and profess religion than to carry water through that swamp for that derned little preacher!" Bob Sheffey, like the young preacher, came in for his share of that kind of abuse.

Peter Cartwright held a protracted meeting in which many people, old and young, were

converted. Among the number was a daughter of an infidel blacksmith, and he swore in his anger that if he ever saw the preacher he would whip him. The blacksmith lived on the bank of the river, kept the ferry, and run his shop. Some years after the revival, a large, portly, well-dressed gentleman, riding a fine horse, rode up to the ferry and wanted to cross the river. The ferryman was very favorably impressed with his fine-looking customer, and, thinking he must be a governor, congressman, or some great state official, was anxious to find out his name. He began to talk as soon as he got started with his boat across the river, and found the stranger very communicative and pleasant. At last the ferryman asked him where he was going. "To Baltimore, to Conference." "What is your name?" "Cartwright," was the answer. "Are you a preacher?" "Yes, sir." "Did you ever hold a meeting in this neighborhood?" said the now excited ferryman. "Yes, about three years ago," said the preacher. At this the big, burly ferryman dropped his oars, leaped to his feet, began rolling up his sleeves, and in a rage walked toward the preacher. "Yes,"

said he, "you held a meeting here, got one of my girls excited into religion, and I promised to give you a whipping the next time I saw you; and I'm a man of my word." The preacher tried to appease his wrath; told him he was a preacher, was not a fighting man, was a man of peace, and he ought to control his temper. But this only infuriated the ferryman, and the preacher tried in every way to reason him out of trying to fight. So the ferryman came rushing up to try to strike him; but the preacher was himself a Goliath in strength, and when the enraged man struck he warded off the blow with one hand and with the other grasped the man and held him as if he were in a vise; then, picking the cursing, screaming madman up, walked to the gunwale or side of the boat and ducked his whole body, save his face, under the water. He cried and begged for his life. "Well," said the preacher, "pray." "I can't," said the now begging penitent. "But you've got to pray, or I'll drown you." "Well," said the begging ferryman, "tell me what to pray, and I'll try it." The preacher repeated the Lord's Prayer, and he followed. "Now," said

the preacher, "you must promise me that you will read your Bible." "I won't," said the man. "If you don't, I'll drown you!" "I will," said he. "Will you have family prayers with your wife and children?" said the preacher. "I can't do that." "If you don't, I'll drown you!" "All right, I will." "I am going to preach at your church six weeks from next Sunday; will you come to hear me?" "Yes." "If I take you out of the water, will you set me over the river?" "I will." The preacher lifted the almost drowned, dripping, frozen, and shivering boatman back into the boat; he seized the oars, and without a word rowed to the landing refused money for the ferriage, and watched the preacher as far as he could see him. At the appointed time he was at church, professed religion, and kept his promise to the preacher.

The same Peter Cartwright, once when on his return from Richmond, Va., to his work in Kentucky, found himself, late one Saturday evening, midway the Cumberland Mountain, in a thinly settled section, and only an occasional mountain inn where travelers could be sheltered or entertained overnight. About

sundown he rode up to a very nice-looking building, that looked more inviting than most of the houses he had passed. He called, and the proprietor, a neatly dressed and pleasant gentleman, came out and spoke to him. "Can I spend the night and over Sunday with you, mister?" The idea of spending Sunday was rather suspicious, and the proprietor, looking kindly up into his face, said: "You must be a preacher." "Yes, I am a preacher; never travel on Sunday, and I should like to stay with you until Monday." "Well, parson, I would like to keep you; but I've been promising my girls that they might have a dance, and this is the night they are going to have it, and that would not be very pleasant to you." "How far is it to where I can find a place?" "About seven miles from here you can get a very good place." The preacher looked at the setting sun, thought of his tired horse and his rider, and said: "Mister, I have ridden a long way to-day, and am very tired; so is my horse. It's nearly dark now; I'm too tired to ride any farther; and if you have a spare room and feed for my horse, I'll try to put up with the dancing." "All right, parson; get down and

come in. I am mighty sorry about the dance, but we will do the best we can for you." A negro boy was called to put up the horse, the preacher was taken into a large, tidy-looking sitting room and told to make himself comfortable; that his supper would soon be ready. Supper over, the preacher went back into the room, seated himself by the fire, and was thinking how he could spend the long hours of the coming Sunday in that lonesome place. Soon he could hear the rattle of buggy wheels, the tramp of fast-approaching horses' feet, and the young people began to gather into the room in bunches—young ladies, giggling girls, boys, and young men. Brilliant lights were placed about the room, until every nook and corner was as light as day. Two large negro men came in, one with a violin, the other with a banjo, and were seated over in one corner. The old preacher could see that he was the cynosure of all eyes, and even the colored Sambos showed surprise at the presence of the preacher at the dance. Ever and anon he could hear some one whisper, "He's a preacher"; and one pert, gaudily dressed young woman said, "Yes, and

I'm going to ask that preacher to dance with me!" When all had gotten in, and the dancing was about ready to begin, they formed a ring around the room; the fiddlers were tuning up, the leader had taken his place in the middle of the floor and commanded all to select their partners, when this smart young lady walked up to the preacher and said: "Parson, will you take my arm in the dance?" It was a poser for the preacher—must he say yes or no? Thoughts like dreams flashed through his mind—"Shall I accept or reject? will it be right or wrong? will I do harm or good?" But at last, with the politeness of a dancing master, he accepted, and walked out into the floor with the young lady, holding tight to her arm. Whispers went all around the room—"The preacher's going to dance"; "I told you there wasn't any harm in it"; and all such remarks. Now just as the dance was starting, music began, and the master cried, "All ready; swing your partners!" the preacher raised his hand—"Attention a moment, please"—and everything stopped and perfect silence reigned. He said: "I am a Christian and a preacher of the gospel, and

never go into anything without first asking God's blessing on what I am about to do; and I've never danced before, and I want you all to kneel with me while I pray." The preacher was holding the young lady's arm when he knelt; some of the dancers rushed out, some knelt, some laughed; the two black Sambos slipped out, exclaiming as they went, "Good Lawd, what's massa gwine to do?" The preacher began his prayer; the young lady tried to get loose from the grasp of his hand, but no—she pulled, she jerked, but he held her as if it were the grip of a vise. Louder and more eloquent became his prayer, and still the young lady was making desperate efforts to get loose from the grip of her captor; but the prayer continued, the voice of the preacher, the pathos, the eloquence, touched every heart; soon some were weeping, others crying for mercy; and now the pert young lady, when she saw there was no escape from the preacher, began to cry, then to pray, then to beg for mercy for her lost soul; and before the prayer closed, many were the cries for mercy. When he arose he sung a song, exhorted, called for penitents, and the floor was filled

with weeping seekers of religion. Before he closed the service that night, numbers were converted. He held service the next day, and many others were converted. He organized a church with forty or fifty members, and sent them a preacher, and said it was the best dance he ever attended. How like many of Bob Sheffey's troubles!

In one of the rich valleys of Southwest Virginia there was an elegant home, where Sheffey often stopped and was always welcomed and handsomely entertained. The husband, though a sinner, was fond of Sheffey, and was always delighted to see him coming; and the wife, a cultured Christian lady, always made his stay as pleasant as possible. Sheffey became anxious about the conversion of the husband, and in his prayer in the family always prayed especially that he might get religion and go to heaven with his good, sweet wife. It was the last thing he would say when leaving: "Good-by brother; give your heart to Jesus, give up your sins, and make sure work for heaven, where your good wife and dear little children are going." The husband laughingly said to his wife one day: "If Shef-

fey doesn't let me alone about religion, I am gong to tell him that I don't believe the Bible; and he'll think I'm an infidel, and will let me alone." When Sheffey came back the next time to spend the night, he held family prayers after supper, and before starting to bed said: "Well, brother, I want you to get sweet religion." The man stopped him by saying: "Why, Brother Sheffey, don't you know I don't believe the Bible, and don't believe in religion?" Sheffey was surprised, and there was a hurt look on his face. He began to argue the question, but his host made other declarations against Christ, the Bible, and religion. With a look of pained horror and distress, Sheffey asked to be shown to his bed. Without another word the man showed him to his room and retired. When he reached his wife's room, she said: "Husband, you ought not to have talked to Brother Sheffey as you did. You know you did not believe a word you said to him, and I think you hurt his feelings." At that the man began to feel ashamed of himself; said he was sorry, and would fix it up with Brother Sheffey in the morning. He went to bed, but not to sleep.

Regrets for having talked to that good man as he had filled him with remorse. He tossed and rolled in the bed, he got up, walked the floor, and never closed his eyes to sleep the livelong night. He tried to study a plan by which he could apologize without sacrificing his dignity, and yet regain the good will of his eccentric preacher friend. Morning came, and the breakfast bell rang. Bob Sheffey came to the table with a solemn, pained look pictured on his countenance. He asked a blessing at the table, but he ate in silence. The husband tried in vain to get him to talk as was his custom. The good wife was equally distressed about the offense her husband had unintentionally given the preacher. The host found no chance to apologize at the table. When breakfast was over, Sheffey pushed back his plate, and said in a gruff voice: "I want to get my horse." "All right, Brother Sheffey; I'll get your horse." "No," said Sheffey, "I'll get him myself." "No," said the kind man, "you sit still, Brother Sheffey, and let me bring out your horse for you." "No," said Sheffey; and they both arose and started for the stable. Not a word was spo-

JOINING THE CHURCH IN A STABLE.

ken until they were two-thirds of the way to the stable, when the man said: "Brother Sheffey, I was just joking with you last night; I do believe in the Bible." "Well, I'm mighty glad to hear you say that, brother," said Sheffey. "Yes, and I believe in Christ and religion just as much as you do, Brother Sheffey." "Well, thank the Lord; I'm mighty glad to hear you say that, my brother; and you ought to get religion, brother!" "I know I ought, Brother Sheffey; and I intend to seek religion the first opportunity." They had reached the stable, opened the door, and Sheffey was putting the bridle on his horse, when he said: "And, brother, you ought to join the Church, and go to heaven with your sweet wife!" "I know I ought, Brother Sheffey; and the very first opportunity I intend to join the Church." At this juncture Sheffey dropped the bridle at his feet, squared himself against the horse trough, took off his hat, and said: "I will now sing a few verses of the song 'I am bound for the promised land'; and I will open the doors of the Church, and if there is anybody present who wishes to join the Church, he may

come forward and give me his hand while I'm singing the song." Sheffey struck up the song; the man was "in for it," and went forward, gave his hand to the preacher, and was received into the Church there in the stable.

CHAPTER XIV.

A Mountain Wedding.

Girls, like boys, are full of curiosity. A bevy of five or six gleesome, frolicsome girls, ranging in age from sweet sixteen to twenty or a little over, had gathered at their Aunt Jane's to spend a few hours one afternoon; and when the conversation had somewhat lagged, they began to beg and tease their aunt—who was the local Thesaurus, or treasure house, of all the "folklore" of their neighborhood—to tell them of a wedding she had witnessed when she was but a girl in the mountains of West Virginia. "Please, Aunt Jane, tell us; there's nobody here but us, and mother said you were there, and that you told her all about it—such a strange, funny wedding, and we want to hear about it too." At last she consented: raised her spectacles upon top of her head, dropped her knitting in her lap, folded her hands across her knees, and nodded for all to keep silence and give attention. She prefaced her story with the remark: "I will have to give you a description of the country,

the people, and the time, before you can appreciate the story of the wedding you all want to hear about; so now be patient and hear it all."

"You know, girls, that strange things happen now and then even on the most solemn occasions and in the best regulated families. It is the unexpected that provokes our risibles and places them beyond the control of their possessor. It was when I was but a little girl, and you know from these gray hairs and wrinkled face that it was a long time ago; but it appears as if it was only yesterday, so fresh come the pictures on memory's canvas. If you have never been in West Virginia, embracing the counties in the mountain region with its alternate ridge and valley, its black seams of coal, and its narrow strips of fertile blue grass land, you have missed some of nature's choicest bits of scenery. In the county of M——, now pierced by railroads and flooded with a large mining population, but a few years back was a desolate mountain region, with but few inhabitants and sparsely settled. The people for the most part were poor—educational and religious advantages meager

—living along the streams in the little log cabins with small patches of land cleared for garden truck and a corn patch. They lived in the most primitive style. The man was lucky if he owned a horse, a cow or two, a small flock of sheep, a few pigs, an old-fashioned rifle gun, two or three gum-log bee stands, and a well-authenticated mountain wild-hog claim. Such homes were usually very healthy and nearly always blessed with a numerous progeny. Roads were as scarce as the proverbial 'hen's teeth.' A mountain path or an old Indian trail answered every purpose for finding one's way to the mill, with the weekly grist of corn or for the monthly visit to the courthouse. It was sometimes ten or fifteen miles from one neighbor's house to another, and this made it very inconvenient when they had to borrow a shovel of 'fire' or a mess of meal. It had its advantages, however. Fashions never changed. A 'hunting shirt,' a pair of leather 'pants' or breeches, a coon-skin cap, answered for court and field, corn-husking, and log-rolling, church or hunt, for the men; while the famous 'homespun dress' and sunbonnet satisfied the highest ambition of

wife and mother. Not so the young men and fair maidens. The young man, as soon as he began to scramble into the twenties and cast sheep eyes at the girls, would don a Sunday suit of home-woven jeans, bound with some delicate shade of red or yellow, a store hat, a red cotton handkerchief, scented with the best grade of sassafras or cinnamon perfume, and with hair well bathed in bear's oil and sleeked and parted at the proper angle, was now ready to make a 'mash,' or to be the much-sought-for hero at the frolic. The young damsel must have one solid-colored dress of red or blue linsey, generally spun, woven, and made by her own hand, some lace collars, a bright shade of ribbon, and a white bonnet or hat of the plainer straw variety. If she had a pair of 'store' shoes, which were much coveted and generally gotten after great sacrifice, at the expense of eggs, butter, and chickens, they were only worn on special occasions; and so much were they prized that the girls would carry stockings and shoes and walk barefooted within a short distance of church or frolic, and then sit down and put on their unsoiled foot-gear. In most of the homes cooking, eating,

and sleeping were all done in the same room. The cooking, in the open fireplace, was plain but wholesome. If a girl had a sweetheart to come to see her, it was rather embarrassing to entertain him before the whole family, unless it was warm enough for them to sit under the woodshed or loomhouse on the outside.

"Court day in the mountain county towns was a great time. Everybody was there. Men would ride or walk twenty-five or thirty miles, some starting the day before, traveling all the night, with no earthly business except the 'habit,' and to get the news or swap horses, or to help a neighbor exchange an undesirable beast. In fact, horse-jockeying was always a 'feature'—one of the principal streets of the village was known as 'Jockey's Alley.' The horse buyer was there, likewise the seller, and the man who was ready to swap horses for a 'leetle' boot. The truth is, the court proceeding, much of the time, was merely perfunctory with judge and sheriff, and the principal attraction was the 'patent medicine man,' the auctioneer, the peddler, the cake-and-cider cart, and the man who sold a twenty-five-cent cake of soap 'that

takes off grease spots or dirt, and would cure cancers, itch, and all the diseases that human flesh is heir to.' Log-rolling or house-raising was an event that was much talked of before and long remembered afterwards.

"Preaching days were red-letter days. For weeks before the appointed time, preparations were made, and preacher and preaching were the talk of the neighborhood. If the Sunday happened to be clear and balmy, the country for miles around turned out 'en masse'—in wagons and carts, on horseback, afoot—old folks with the merry young maidens, dressed in their best 'bib and tucker,' cheeks as rosy as a peach, and gallanted by their manly country lovers. Oh, what epochs in the lives of the young Apollos and their rustic Venuses! Those lovely jaunts to and from the old country 'meetinghouse!' What dreams of bliss as the bashful lover pressed his suit for the hand of the maiden whose very looks charmed his whole being and seemed the center of his existence! How those dark hazel eyes, upturned to his, and those cheeks, blushing into beauty as she plighted her eternal love to him, seemed to thrill him with an ecstasy not born

of earth! It was to him the sipping of nectar from the spring of the gods. But preaching days did not come often; the people lived far apart, were few in number and poor, so the preacher seldom got around—his field was so large and his pay scant. Occasionally an exhorter or local preacher would hold a service, or in the summertime keep up a regular monthy appointment. If any persons got married, they had to wait for the regular 'circuit rider,' or go to town and get a justice of the peace. There was one man, it is true, John Baytree, who had license to preach; but he did not preach often—besides, he had a large family, and it required most of his time to get bread for them, let alone trying to feed the gospel flock. John was a very popular man—was the county sheriff, had been for years. In fact, John Baytree was so popular, and did his official duties so promptly and satisfactorily, that no one would dare to run against him. And John was a good man, and tried to do his duty faithfully. He did keep up one appointment at 'Mount Pisgah,' over on Dry Run Creek; but it was so far away from his home—about twenty miles, no roads

—and in the winter the mountain paths were almost impassable and the weather so cold that he never tried to preach there except in the summertime. But the sheriff-parson went to Pisgah regularly one Sunday in every month from May to September, and he always had big congregations. They enjoyed John's sermons, and they liked the man. After the service it was a race with the people as to who should get to the pulpit first to secure a promise from the sheriff-parson to take dinner and spend the night in their homes.

"Clever—never such hospitality among any people as you will find among these mountaineers! They will divide the last crumb, and you can't please them better than to eat at their table or sleep under their roof. 'Sense' did you say? Well, they may not have much text-book education, are not very well acquainted with the Greek roots or classic lore, but they are not fools by a long shot. They have plenty of old-fashioned horse sense; and while they are not overly versed in their mother tongue, they read and write, and one book is found in almost every home—the Bible.

They may be lacking in what the world calls polish or culture, but they make up for all that in hospitality and in sensible simplicity.

"Well now, as well as I remember it was the first Sunday in June, 1849, when Parson Baytree had an appointment to preach on 'Dry Run' at old Pisgah church. He got up early that morning while the stars were yet shining, and after a hasty preparation and a hearty breakfast, he mounted his horse and started on his long journey of twenty miles to his appointment. It was not yet good light, and the fresh, balmy June air, the fragrance of the richly scented forest flowers, and the music from the feathery songsters awakened responsive melodies in his own soul and was enough to make a sick man feel well. Crossing stream and glen, and now climbing the precipitous mountain side, his 'sure-footed beast' makes the vale below echo with his tramp as he winds along the dim, tortuous pathway to the summit of its highest peak. And now, as he overtops the mountain, the first rays of the sun greet his delighted gaze, rising as from a sea of crystals—his beams, like dazzling threads of gold, falling in gilded

splendor on plain and hilltop and kissing all nature into bloom and beauty. He paused but a moment to gaze upon that enrapturing scene and to drink in the sublime beauties of that panoramic picture, as the sunbeam, like the 'wand of a magician,' touches, paints, and transforms tree, pebble, and sky into blossomed loveliness. Then, as he could see above and beyond it all that Omnipotent Hand that made it, he breathed a prayer; and then, urging his horse to renewed effort, he wends his way down the winding gorge, his mind lost in the charming beauties ever rising before him. He takes no note of time or distance. Five, ten, fifteen miles are behind him, and as the rising sun grows warmer in that cloudless, breezeless sky, both rider and horse begin to feel the enervating effect of heat and travel.

"They are now descending a mountain, and just before getting to the hollow below, the sheriff-parson notices the horse prick his ears and turn his head to look at something seemingly unusual. The sheriff quickly follows the gaze of the horse; he discovers far up the gorge above him a tall moving object. He

reins his tired horse to get a better view, and now he discovers what seems in outline a tall old man—hatless, with long gray hair, shaggy beard covering a thin, wrinkled face; coatless, and with aged trousers whose tattered lower extremities were poked into the top of some old stogy boot-legs. The old man seemed to be wandering in a purposeless manner—his eyes gazing now up through the tree tops as if looking for wild bees, now trailing the ground as if hunting for a lost path—his whole deportment betraying to the tired sheriff the actions of either a wild or lost man, or some old demented creature who had wandered far from human habitation. Sheriff Baytree turns his horse and rides toward the stranger, and when he gets near him he discovers that it is old 'Uncle Billy Dafton,' who lives away across the mountain in Pulltite Gulf, some twelve miles away.

"Sheriff Baytree knew him just as soon as he got close enough to see him plainly, for he knew everybody in the county—all the children, their names and ages. In his electioneering trips he had visited every cabin, learned where they came from, their parents

and grandparents, and of course he knew old 'Uncle Billy Dafton;' but what could Uncle Billy be doing away out here in this wilderness, so far from home, and acting in this strange way on Sunday morning? Uncle Billy was well known, for he was one of the oldest inhabitants of the county; but he was as deaf as a chair post, and had been for years—he could hardly hear it thunder, and if you ever made him understand what you were trying to say to him, you had to scream loud enough to split your throat, and then repeat it a dozen times until you had shouted yourself hoarse and exhausted your lungs. Uncle Billy would always place both hands to his ears as if to assist in catching the sound, and conveying it to the central office of the brain, fix his eyes on you as if to watch every movement of your vocal machinery, and open his mouth as if to supply you with the right word if you should fail to coin it yourself. Sheriff Baytree rode up close to the old man without being observed, and surprised Uncle Billy by tapping him on the shoulder with his hand and screaming into his ears, "Hello, Uncle Billy, what are you doing here?' Uncle Billy raised his

UNCLE BILLY DAFTON AND PARSON BAYTREE—LOST HEIFER.

hands to his ears, and with 'Hey! What did you say?' waited a repetition of the sheriff's query. At last he told Sheriff Baytree that his three-year-old heifer, 'Pide,' had strayed from home, had been gone three or four days, and he was afraid she would go dry.

"The sheriff had not seen or heard of any stray cow of that description, and could give him no information as to her whereabouts; but after much effort and loud screaming, he got Uncle Billy to understand that he was on his way over to 'Dry Run,' and was going to preach over there at Pisgah church at 11 o'clock that day. 'And, Uncle Billy, if you will go with me—it's only about three miles now—I will give notice to the congregation that you have lost your cow, and maybe some one will be able to tell you where she is.' 'You say you will do what?' said Uncle Billy. 'I will publish to the people at church to-day, if you will go with me, that you have lost a cow, a young heifer, and there will be lots of people there from all over the country, and it will be possible that some one there will know something of your cow.' 'You will, hey? Then I'll go; tell 'em her name's Pide, only

three years old, mostly red, and I'll go ef you will publish it for me.' 'All right!' shouted Sheriff Baytree; 'come on.' And on they both started at a pretty lively gait.

"The conversation was very limited, as time was too precious for the sheriff-parson to stand while shouting to Uncle Billy; besides, he would need his voice for his now gathering congregation at Pisgah. Sheriff Baytree's thoughts for a moment lingered on Uncle Billy Dafton's cow, and the old man's seeming distress at her loss, and then his mind wandered on to his discourse, his text, his sermon, and ere he was aware they had gotten up among the neighing horses and gathering throngs at Pisgah church. The little sloping hill on which the church stood was alive with a moving mass of humanity, and every tree and bush was being sought out as a hitching post for the horses.

"Alighting from his horse, Sheriff Baytree began looking about for a suitable place to hitch; and when at last this was accomplished, and while with switch and hand he attempted to remove dust and hair from his soiled garments preparatory to his pulpit ministration,

a well-dressed young man very timidly approached and beckoned him to one side for a very private interview. The young man handed the parson a marriage license, at the same time requesting him to perform the ceremony that afternoon at four o'clock at Pisgah church. Sheriff Baytree was both surprised and alarmed. The request was like a clap of thunder from a clear sky. He had served warrants on men, arrested criminals, taken bad husbands away from weeping wives to jail, but never before had he been called upon to marry a couple, to tie those indissoluble knots that bind man and woman together as husband and wife. At first he felt like refusing; but then, as he began to take a sober second thought, reason reasserted her sway, and he blandly gave his consent. The young man, who was he? Why, the son of the best family in the county; and the young lady? Oh, he knew her father and mother—a splendid family. Then, when the young man bashfully retired, Sheriff Baytree began to feel a kind of pride—yea, it was a new honor thrust upon him—and his heart flushed with expectancy at the thought of being master of ceremonies

on this auspicious occasion. In fact, the wedding, the honorable young bridegroom, the charming bride, the respected parentage of both, and the wedding feast, all filled Sheriff Baytree with visions of pleasure and honor.

"A song starts the service, Parson Baytree takes his place in the pulpit, every seat in the big log church is filled and some stand at the door and at the windows outside. Old Uncle Billy Dafton is there, and takes his seat at the door in the back end of the church in full view of the preacher, his lost heifer the sole thought of his being; with both hands up to his ears, and with eyes wide open, he watches and tries to hear everything the preacher has to say. Another song, a prayer, a Bible lesson read, then the sermon fifty minutes in length, the last prayer and song; and now Parson Baytree gets up, and with all the dignity that he could well muster he gravely announced the coming wedding at four o'clock at the church, and who the parties were. He spoke in the highest praise of the young gentleman to be wedded, his noble ancestry and his splendid character; and when he had thus eulogized him and commenced to praise the

"Say, Parson; tell 'em her name's Pide, three-year-old. She's got no ha'r on her stomach, and is dry in one tit!"

beautiful young bride—her home, father, mother, her accomplishments, beauty, how well qualified she was to be the companion of the young man—'Uncle Billy Dafton,' who had been very nervous during this last adulatory performance—for, although he had not heard a word, he supposed the preacher was now talking about his lost cow, of which Sheriff Baytree in his excitement about the wedding had forgotten that he had ever promised to mention—just as the preacher was winding up his eulogy by saying that she was the smartest, prettiest woman that had ever married in the county, and was about to pronounce the benediction, what should Uncle Billy Dafton do but 'dance to his feet,' beckon to the preacher, shouting at the top of his voice: 'An' say, Parson; you can tell 'em her name's Pide, she's got no ha'r on her stomach, and is dry in one tit!'

"That threw the 'fat' in the fire, children; and while the embarrassed and mortified preacher turned as white as a corpse, the people all sneaked out, one at a time, behind the church to laugh. And that is all I remember about that mountain wedding."

CHAPTER XV.

Hon. C. B. M. Foxy, a Mountain Character.

'Tis said the devil a saint would be,
And a devil of a saint was he.

Nature may make but few mistakes, but she has certainly developed many cranks. Man at his best is a funny creature, but when you run across one with a slight bias in his make-up, if you can't label him a crank you can call him one of nature's paradoxes. Of course we have all seen such paradoxes among our fellows, but we do not like to be personal, or to tell a man point-blank to his face, "You, sir, are a crank!" Then, besides, it is dangerous. As has been truthfully said, "Honor compels us to tell a man his faults to his face, but the law of self-preservation makes it safer to tell them to his neighbor." But there are cranks and cranks. Now the subject of this biographical sketch is not what is termed, in common parlance, a crank. All cranks are supposed to be men of one idea—a man who has a hobby, and who rides that hobby on all occasions, as

men ride horses. Some of the world's greatest inventions are the "brain children" of these cranks or geniuses; but our hero, if we should call him a crank, is not one of that class, but rather the opposite.

Mr. C. B. M. Foxy, a denizen of the mountains of Kentucky, was born many years ago. Like most men of his peculiar talent, he succeeded in marrying a wife, and his progeny is so numerous that one or more of his family may be found in every neighborhood. His parents must have been above the average in sense and observation, for at his baptismal christening they gave him a Christian name that exactly suited and described his character. The first initial letter of his Christian name "C." stands for Chameleon, the reptile known as tree frog, or lizard, called in natural history the chameleon. It is said to assume the color of whatever object it may happen to touch. If on the body of a tree, it assumes that color; on the ground, like the ground; by a green leaf, it is green; a red leaf, it is red; or black, it is black. Observing these characteristics in their babe, what better name for a starter could they give him than

"Chameleon"? And how true to nature! When his loving mother held him in her affectionate arms and gazed into his eyes, she beheld reflected in his every feature her own exact image—yea, in nose, eyes, mouth, and the very color of her own auburn locks. Likewise, when the father dandled him on his knees and tenderly coaxed him to "coo some for papa now," he could see not only a perfect photograph of himself, but the form and gesture of his father and grandfather. So what better name could they select than "Chameleon"? The second initial stood for Bat. It has always been a question in natural history as to whether the bat is a bird or a beast. Some contend that it is a bird, because it has wings and can fly; but others, with equally as good logic, insist that it is a beast, because it has four feet, is covered with hair, and has teeth and can bite. It was a question among the ancients.

That wise old philosopher Æsop tells in his fable about the great battle of supremacy between the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, that after a hard-fought battle on a strongly contested field the beasts were vic-

SOME PHASES OF C. M. B. FOXY'S CHARACTER—A DENIZEN OF THE MOUNTAINS.

torious, and that the birds of the air were put to flight; but that night after the battle the beasts of the field held a grand jubilee and had a torchlight procession. The lion, being the king of beasts, presided. It was a grand jollification, and the bat was there throwing up his hat and making a greater ado than any of the beasts, and when the lion observed him he said: "Why, Mr. Bat, what are you doing here? I did not know that you were a beast; I thought you were a bird." "Oh no," said the bat, "I'm a beast; don't you see the hair on my body, my four legs? and look at my teeth!" "Well," said the lion, "that's news to me." But the next day the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air met for a second and final contest; and after a long and fierce conflict, the birds were victorious, and the beasts were driven to their caves and dens in the mountains for refuge; and that night the birds held a grand jollification meeting and torchlight procession. The bat was there, throwing up his hat and making more noise than any of the birds; and the eagle, the king of the birds, who presided, when he saw the bat, remonstrated with him: "Why, Mr. Bat, what are

you doing here? I thought you were a beast.' "Oh no," said the bat, "I'm a bird; don't you see my wings?"

How natural it was for his parents, when they observed their son's predisposition to be the express image of the father and mother just as it happened he was with the one or the other, as if by inspiration to label him "Bat." And both of these names seemed to have been prophetic, for he has always been just like the company he happened to be with. When with the birds, he was a bird; with the beasts, a beast.

As to character, C. B. M. Foxy, "chameleon-like," always colored just as he found his surroundings—black or white, good or bad—and his powers of transformation were so natural and perfect that like the bat he could be beast or bird, saint or sinner, pretty or ugly, just as the occasion or company might demand. His character was very much like his old father's cabin—the latch-string always hung on the outside. Tradition says that the initial "M." was not given at his baptism by his parents, but was long after added as a nickname; but it was so well suited that it has

stuck to him like a leech ever since. I have been told that "M." is for Mooney, or Moon; and just why he was called for the moon is an unsettled question—whether it was because in his early days he was so often "full" like the moon, or on account of his many changes and phases, dark and light, wet and dry, quarter and half. If there was ever a man who could assume all the phases of the moon, that could go all the gaits, and be all things to all men, C. B. M. Foxy was the man. He could be milk and cider, vinegar or sugar, pig and puppy, with the ease and grace of a Chesterfield. He belonged to all the secret orders (if they did not blackball him), joined all the clubs, was a charter member of all the societies, and was or had been a member of all the Churches. Leadership was one of his whims or fads. He liked to be the bell-sheep of the flock. As to politics, he was always found with the majority. He was a great man with all the new "stars" in the political firmament, and much sought after until they found out that C. B. M. Foxy was likely to run with the hare and bark with the hounds. Then they would drop him like a hot brick, for "C. B. M." would

always nose around and find out how the majority of his neighbors were going to vote before he would care to express an opinion, and then he was sure to cast his lot with the biggest crowd. And this is why rising young aspirants for political honors, after three or four trials with "C. B. M.," would do him as the man did his fresh big oyster—"vomit him up."

At a midnight dinner, in a big city, a plain country merchant was present, and the first course that was served was raw oysters. This was something new to the countryman, and the eating of uncooked oysters was too much like cannibalism for him; but he was hungry, it was late, and by hook or crook he had managed to get them all down but one big fat oyster—so he just pushed "him" to one side of his plate, and gave up the job. His neighbor sitting next to him happened to spy the oyster. "Ah, you can't eat your oyster?" "No; do you want it?" "Yes"; and forking the big oyster to his mouth, he swallowed it in a jiffy. The countryman gazed at him a moment and observed: "Well, neighbor, you can beat me; I swallowed that oyster four or five times, but

he wouldn't stay down!" And his neighbor quietly heaved it back on his plate.

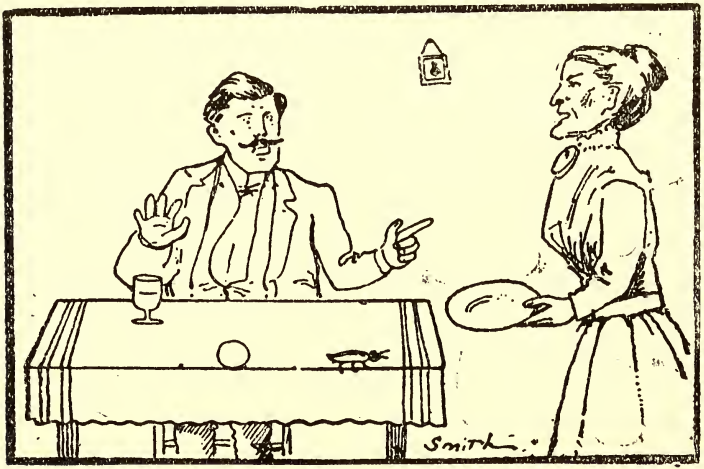
So politically the politicians treated C. B. M. the same way, on account of his staying qualities. Like the old negro's flea, you never knew just "adzackly whar to find him." But C. B. M. Foxy was useful in politics, in the same sense of a weathercock to show which way the wind blows, or a barometer of public opinion. Then he would like to be head waiter at a barbecue, or preside at the free lemonade stand, or march at the head of the procession carrying a big torch, lighting the way to the grand stand. He would court favors from the leaders, for when he found it necessary he would fawn or bootlick his superiors, and with equal felicity browbeat and abuse those he considered his inferiors. Egotism? Brass? Well, yes; he was full of it. As occasion offered, he could exalt or abase himself. He knew it all, and rarely met with anything surprising or new. He carried an immense stock of "gas," and there was no place so high or sacred that he would not go if he had a chance. He had the impudence of the devil, and shame or timidity was not in his vocabulary.

If C. B. M. Foxy had possessed a little more of that virtue, modesty or shyness, "Fortune," or the smile of the gods, might have been more frequently propitious. If he had been gifted with a little of the shyness and reserve of my friend James Gates, and "Jim" had had a small portion of Foxy's brass and egotism, it would have been better for both. "Jim" was a tenant on General Highblood's estate, and was a great favorite of the General's. He had good sense, was a man of fine judgment, a good worker; and the longer he stayed on the place, the better the General liked him. Frequently the General had invited James to eat with him, but Jim always made some excuse not to accept, his timidity and bashfulness being the principal barriers, for he had often promised himself that he would accept of the General's hospitality; but there was always so much company at the General's, and so much style, and Jim felt himself to be so awkward, that he could never brace up to such an undertaking. But one evening James was at the General's on business. It was nearly supper time, and when Jim was about ready to start the General said: "Now, Jim, you must stay

and eat with me; you never have, and I shall not like it if you do not stay and take tea." Jim looked around; there did not seem to be any other company, so he with much misgiving consented to stay and eat. When supper was announced, the General escorted Jim to the table; but lo! a number of well-dressed strangers filed into the dining room, and were promptly introduced to Jim, very much to his embarrassment. Jim was shown to his chair; the General graced the table. Jim's predicament was pitiable. He looked around to see how the other guests did. At his plate was a dish of soup and a napkin, but James did not know what to do with either. He saw the others spread their napkins on their laps, so he put his across his knees; and just as he went to reach his spoon to dish his soup, that slick napkin slipped to the floor, which frustrated him very much. Jim waited a moment, then with one hand he reached for the lost napkin; and not finding it at his first grasp, he tried to bring his eyes down so he could see it without attracting the attention of the other guests; but he did it so suddenly that his chin struck his soup-plate and emptied the plate and its

whole contents into his lap. "There!" exclaimed Jim, with a mournful sigh, "I wish I was in h—l!"

Poor James Gates! who has not sympathized with him a thousand times under similar circumstances? Timid, shy, modest fellow! But C. B. M. Foxy had no such timidity; the flush of shame never mantled his cheek. Religiously, Foxy had as many sides to him as a cat has lives. You would always find him a member of the largest congregation in the community and a helper of the most popular pastor. His theology was as changeable as the seasons, and he could slide or backslide from one Church to another with as much ease and grace as an otter. He would dance under the melody of a fiddle or shout in the excitement of a revival, or *vice versa;* he could weep at a frolic and dance at a funeral. His reputation for religiously attending to everybody's business but his own was proverbial; and while his character presented all the hues of the rainbow and his life the changeableness of the seasons, there was one thing that C. B. M. Foxy could never be induced to be, and that was really pious, or genuinely and



"Oi'll be hanged if Oi eat that there bedbug!"

permanently good. That was one thing he abhorred. He was with real piety like the Irishman was with the bedbug.

Pat had been working hard, had saved some money; so he bought himself a new suit of store clothes, and went to the city to get him a good square meal to eat. He went to the hotel, and sitting down at the table a waitress handed him a bill of fare. Now Pat did not know a letter in the book, so he gazed at the mysterious document for a moment, then beckoning to the waitress he said: "Come here, me lady; come here, me lady." Then putting his finger on the first line, at the top of the list, he said: "Bring me thot, mum!" She glanced at Pat's finger, retired, and in a few moments returned with a bowl of soup. Pat looked at the bowl, shook his head, and finally picked up the bowl, drank down the contents, and sat the empty dish back on the table; but there was a disgruntled scowl on his face. Again looking over the bill of fare, and running his finger some distance down the line, he said: "Come here, me lady; bring me some of thot." She retired, and in a few minutes returned with a glass containing a bunch

of celery. Pat gazed at it, smelled of it, then slowly ate it. He then picked up the bill of fare, and running his finger down to the last item on the list, he said: "Come here, me lady; bring me some of thot." In a moment she returned bearing a plate on which was a big red lobster. Pat looked at it a moment, pushed it as far from him as possible, and exclaimed, "Look here, me lady, Oi drank your bowl of dishwater, Oi ate your flowers, but Oi'll be hanged if Oi eat that there bedbug!"

How, in his repugnance to eating the bedbug, was Pat like our friend Chameleon B. M. Foxy in his repugnance to real virtue and permanent goodness! Such things, in their crystallized and solidified forms of purity and beauty, are distasteful to his moral digestive organs. It is as easy for the "Ethiopian to change his skin or the leopard his spots" as it is for this human hybrid to change his nature. How any creature with the eyes, nose, mouth, tongue, face, ears, hands, and feet of a man occupying the human "form divine" can distort his nature and defeat the purpose of

TRANSMIGRATION.

his being, is a problem too deep for human solution!

Such men as we have just described are enough to confirm the heathen superstition of the transmigration of souls. Satan, it is said, can transform himself into an angel of light, but with no greater ease than Mr. C. B. M. Foxy can transport himself from a saint to a sinner, from milk to cider, from Democrat to Republican, from a man to a beast! He can change himself in an instant into just what you want him to be. The heathen doctrine of transmigration of souls teaches that when a man dies his soul may enter into a horse or dog, a bird or bug or reptile, and its existence may be perpetuated indefinitely. And when you look into the face of our many times transformed Chameleon Foxy, the question naturally arises, "What will he be next?" I can only account for him as Mr. Isaacs, the Jew, did for his friend. Two German Jews met one morning, and the following dialogue occurred:

Strauss: "O say, Mr. Isaacs, vat new doctrine ish dis I hear? Dey call it trampsmikrashun."

Isaacs: Oh, trampsmikrashun, trampsmikrashun; you not know vot dot is?"

Strauss: "No; and I hears very much about it now."

Isaacs: "Vell, vell, I soon tell you vot trampsmikrashun is. It is dis vay. You are now Strauss; some day you dies, and your soul or spirit goes into a donkey. Den some mornin' I gets up and I valks oudt early down de vay, and I meets dat donkey, and it (you) brays, and brays, and says: 'Mishter Isaacs! Mishter Isaacs!' and I says, 'Vy, who are you? I don't know you.' And you says, 'Vy, Mr. Isaacs, you don't know me? Vy, I am Strauss.' And I says, Vat, you Strauss? No, no. Vy, you are a donkey.' Und you says, 'No, no, I am Struss; but I have yoost been trampsmikrated!' Then I strokes your long ears and pats your big cheeks, and I say: 'Vell, vell; now, Strauss, is dis you? Vy, how little you have changed!' Und dot is the trampsmikrashun doctrine."

So we may add that after all our C. B. M. Foxy is just the same old donkey.